1579

GLIMPSES OF PERSIAN LITERATURE

BEING

A SERIES OF SEVEN EXTENSION
LECTURES ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF IRANIAN
THOUGHT AND LITERATURE

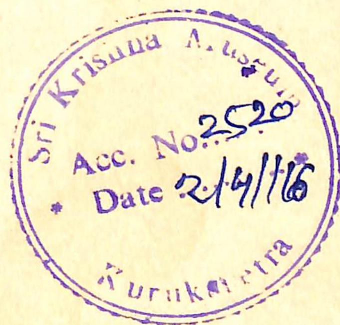
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BY

Dr. ALI ASGHAR HEKMAT

Iranian Ambassador in India
Professor of History of Persian Literature
and of Comparative Religions,
University of Teheran





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PREFACE.

The "Glimpses of Persian Literature" is a series of seven extension lectures on the different aspects of Iranian language and literature, which were delivered by me under the auspices of the Faculty of Arts, at the invitation of the University of Delhi. In these lectures I have, as far as possible, attempted to introduce Iran, her language and literature and their parallel relationship to India. The subject was vast and tremendous and the time at my disposal was short. It embraces, however, a period of over 2500 years beginning from the Achæmenian period till the present day. The famous line of Mauláná Rúmí given below is very appropriate to the case:—

آب دریا را اگر نتوان کشید   هم بقدر تشنگی باید چشید

"If thou canst swallow the waters
of the entire ocean,
Thou mayest be satisfied by drops
to quench thine thirst."

A great deal of care has also gone into the reproduction of very refreshing passages of Persian prose and poetry from authentic and reliable sources.

An outline of each lecture has been given at its beginning for the easy grasp of the subject. It is expected that references made and passages quoted in these lectures will be found useful to the readers in general and the Indian students of Persian in particular.

Needless to say that the Indo-Iranian relation is as old as the Aryans. The very word Iran comes from *Airiyana,* meaning the land of the Aryans. History bears a glowing testimony to the fact that there existed relations between India and Iran—political, commercial, literary and cultural—during its different periods. It is also a link of those historical relations that the authorities of the University of Delhi have been kind enough to give me an opportunity to deliver a course of lectures on the aforesaid subject.

I must thank the Vice-Chancellor Dr. G. S. Mahajani and the authorities of the Delhi University for the kind invitation they accorded to me to deliver these lectures. My thanks are also due to the Iran Society and its learned Secretary, Dr. M. Ishaque, for kindly publishing these lectures and thus bringing them within the reach of the interested.

New Delhi,
April, 1956.

A. A. HEKMAT.

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(*a*) *Important political periods of the history of Iran*

Iranian history which is more or less documented with a written record and the details of which may form the subject matter of authentic study and discussion, extends over a period of 2,500 years. Roughly, it began in the year B.C. 550 and continues to the present day. It may be divided into three periods as follows:—

I *Pre-Islamic Era*: It may be said to have begun with the rise of the Achæmenian Dynasty, founded by Cyrus, the Great, in B.C. 546 and lasted until the defeat of the Sásánian dynasty by the Arab (Muslim) invaders in A.D. 636 extending over eleven centuries.

II *Islamic Era*: It extends from the time of the establishment of Islám under the Arabs upto the present day (while a new era may be said to have begun with the commencement of the 19th century), covering fourteen centuries.

III *The Contemporary Era*: It actually commenced with the beginning of the 19th century *i.e.,* the end of the Irano-Russian wars in A.D. 1828.

Even before the rise of the Achæmenian Dynasty the geographical boundaries of Iran were marked by the Oxus and the Persian Gulf on the one hand, and by the Indus and the Euphrates on the other. This vast region was inhabited in the North by a people of Aryan stock whom the Greeks called the Medes. The *Sháhnáma* (شاهنامه) refers to them

as the Píshdádiyán (پیشدادیان). Though the Iranian culture and civilization as well as the purest Aryan traditions existed during that period, the distinct culture of Iran and her actual written history began under the Achæmenians.

I—PRE-ISLAMIC ERA

It was during this era that the purely national culture of Iran, whose remnants are still found both within and outside the country, had reached the zenith of its growth and development. This part of Iranian history may be subdivided into three distinct periods:

A. The Achæmenian (هخامنشی) Period, or, in the words of the *Sháhnáma,* the Age of the Kayáns (کیان) This period began with the accession of Cyrus, the Great (B.C. 546) whom some of the scholars identify with Kaikhusraw (کیخسرو) of the *Sháhnáma.* It ended with the invasion of Alexander, the Great, who routed the Achæmenians and brought the end of the dynasty. The last Achæmenian king was put to death in B.C. 330.

The chief characteristics of this period are the evolution of the Ancient Persian language and the spreading abroad of the culture and political influence of Iran over an area extending from India to Greece.

B. The Second Period is the Parthian period which, in the *Sháhnáma,* has been referred to as the Age of Ashkániyán (اشکانیان). It represents an Age of the rule of the "Kings of the Tribes" (ملوک الطوائف) and included the rule of the Greek Seleucids as well as of later chieftains, mainly the descendants of Ashk (اشك اول). The latter ruled over small principalities in different parts of the country. The period began with the assassination of Darius Codomannus in B.C. 330 and ended with the defeat of Ardawán, the Arsacid (اردوان اشکانی), by Ardeshir (اردشیر بابکان) in A.D. 226.

During this period, Iran was somewhat under the political and cultural influence of Greece. Written records and detailed information belonging to the period are lacking and it may be described as "the Dark Age" of Iranian history.

C. The Pahlaví Period, or, according to the *Sháhnáma* the Sásánian epoch (ساسانیان), began with the fall of Ardawán

and the founding of the Sásánian Dynasty by Ardeshir in A.D. 226, and continued until the Arab (Muslim) invasion of Iran and the break-up of the Iranian empire at the death of Yazdigird III in A.D, 651.

Of this period, which is nearer to our own, there has survived a comparatively larger amount of records, both in the form of books, inscriptions and notices left by Greek, Roman and Arab historians as well as the accounts contained in the *Sháhnáma* The history of Iran at this stage discards its legendary form and becomes a written history.

The pre-Islamic era of the Iranian history with a scope of eleven centuries, which may be described as "the Purely Iranian Period" is an epoch which heralded the birth of Persian, first in the form of Avestan and Old Persian (فرس قدیم), and later on, as Pahlaví or Middle Persian (پهلوی).

The Rock Inscription of Darius, the Great (B.C. 521) and some inscriptions of his descendants, written in cuneiform script, have survived the vicissitudes of time. So also have the *Gáthás* of *Avesta* been saved for the posterity by the good old Zoroastrians. These are the two written documents that are still extant.

Similarly, during this period, the people of Iran became possessed of an independent religion of their own, called Zoroastrianism. Influences of Vedic and Buddhist teachings are apparent in ancient Iran, particularly in the East.

The first period in the pre-Islamic era ended with the invasion of Alexander and the Greek occupation of the Euphrates valley in Southern Iran and the territory upto the banks of the Ráví in the East of Iran, including modern Afghánistán.

True, the Greek rule or their culture did not stay for long in Iran, but since the Greeks differed from the people of Iran in religion, culture, language and script, the effect and influence of their brief sway continued to be felt for nearly four centuries, the traces of which may yet be seen in Afghánistán.

The period has yielded a number of legends and stories attributed to Alexander. Apart from the many *Iskandar-Námas* (اسکندر نامه), hardly any notable record has reached us.

The third period viz., the Sásánian Epoch, was the Age of Iranian re-birth. During this period, Iranian culture acquired a special splendour and magnificence. Zoroastrianism, which had terribly suffered at the hands of Alexander and his successors as well as under the Arsacids or Parthians, was once again revived. The Pahlaví language and script

spread among the people. Several Pahlaví books and manuscripts have survived to the present day. Also during this period, certain influences of Christianity in the West and of Hinduism in the Eastern parts of Iran are perceptible.

Pahlaví inscriptions on rocks and stone slabs used in palaces as well as over coins and seals, together with religious treatises and translations of the *Avesta* into that language are the written records of this period which have survived up to the present day.

The literature of the period was mostly religious in character and consisted of prayers and theological discussions on Zoroastrianism. The influence of this Age and its literature is still perceptible in the language of modern Iran. The Pahlaví literature also continued to influence to a large degree the language and literature of Iran for about three centuries after the Arab invasion.

The *Sháhnáma* of Firdawsi (شاهنامهٔ فردوسی) is the most authentic Iranian source of history for this period. It contains verses in the epic style celebrating the legends of the first two periods, viz., those of the "Píshdádiyán" and the "Kayán". It briefly deals with the third period, viz., the period of the "Ashkániyán", which extended over four centuries.

From the Sásánian Period, the *Sháhnáma* gives a detailed account which has documentary value in the history of Iran. Abu'l-Qásim Firdawsí, the poet who composed the *Sháhnáma*, lived in Ṭús towards the end of the 4th century A.H./10th century A.D.

II—ISLAMIC ERA

After the fall of Ctesiphon (مداین) at the hands of the Arab (Muslim) invaders in the year A.H. 16/A.D. 637 and the death of Yazdigird III in A.D. 651 the Sásánian empire was uprooted and the second period in the history of Iran began with the intermingling of the Arabs with the Iranians racially, and of the Arabic language with Pahlaví linguistically, as well as with the spread of Islam all over Iran.

This part (the Islamic era) may also be subdivided into two periods, each having its own characteristics and peculiarities.

The First Period, known as the "Golden Age of Islam", began with the establishment of the Caliphate in the year A.D. 632 and ended with the capture of Baghdad by Húlágú Khán, the grandson of Chingíz, in A.D. 1258. The Caliphate founded in Damascus by the Umayyáds (A.D. 661) was later transferred to Baghdad by the Abbasids in A.D. 750.

During this period, several Iranian dynasties, like the Ṣaffárids (صفاریان), the Sámánids (سامانیان) and the Buwayhids (بویهیان) and, later on, Turkish dynasties, like the Ghaznavids (غزنویان), the Seljúqs (سلجوقیان) and the Khwárazmsháhís (خوارزمشاهیان) founded independent kingdoms in eastern, northern and southern Iran.

The most important of these dynasties, so far as their impact on the Indian history is concerned, were the Ghaznavids who founded their kingdom in Ghazna in A.D. 962. The inroads and depredations of Sultan Maḥmúd in the Punjab and as far as Kanauj are well-known. After him his successors and the Ghori chieftains followed their conquests in northern India

One of the characteristics of this period is the birth of a new culture, known as the Islamic Culture, whose chief agents were the Iranians. During this period celebrated works in different fields of learning, such as Law, Sciences, Literature and Philosophy etc., were written by Iranian scholars mostly in Arabic.

Modern Persian was born as a result of the intermingling of the Arabic and Pahlavi languages. Soon, new forms of prose and poetry appeared in the newly-born language and gradually it attained its highest summit in clarity, accuracy and eloquence. Eminent prose writers, like the munshis of Khurásán and Fárs, and the renowned poets of Iran flourished during this period. Detailed information on the language and literature of Iran is given in Lecture II.

The Second Period, known as the period of the decline of the Islamic Culture, began with the capture of Baghdad by Húlágú, the Mongol, in A.D. 1258 and ended with the end of the Irano-Russian wars in the beginning of the 19th century.

This period also may be sub-divided into two epochs:

1. The age of the ascendency of the Mongols and the Tartars, beginning with the invasion of Hulágú in A.D. 1256 and continuing upto the accession of Sháh Ismá'íl I (شاه اسمعیل اول) and his conquest of Tabríz in A.D. 1502.

2. The age of Nationalistic empires in Iran, viz., the Ṣafavid and the Qájár, from the accession of Sháh Ismá'íl I

in A.D. 1502 upto the establishment of constitutional government in A.D. 1906.

The peculiarities of this period are the establishment of Shí'ah-ism as the state religion and Iran's isolation from all other Islamic countries, except India.

It is during this period that India was invaded by Tímúr (A.D. 1397) and, later on, Bábur, one of his descendants, founded a Mongol empire in this country in A.D. 1526. Their courts were deeply influenced by the cultural and intellectual traditions of Iran.

The next important event of this period was the coming into power of the Ottoman Turks and the establishment of the Turkish Caliphate in Constantinople, which was conquered by them in A.D. 1453. There was a long-drawn conflict between the Iranians and the Ottoman Turks, which contributed to the decline of the Islamic Culture in no mean degree.

III—CONTEMPORARY ERA

The third part of this long story deals with the modern and contemporary history. This era began in Iran with the commencement of the Irano-Russian wars, beginning in the early nineteenth century and culminating in A.D. 1828. This period continues to the present day.

The chief characteristics of this period are the birth of Nationalism and the various independence and reformation movements in Asia and elsewhere. It is during this period that constitutions and civil and criminal laws were framed on fresh lines and universities were founded in the East.

New discoveries of the powers of steam, electricity and atom as well as the development of modern industries and the results achieved from democracy in many countries are some other characteristics of this period.

The outstanding date of the modern era in Iran is the year A.H. 1324/A.D. 1906 when autocracy was replaced by constitutional monarchy.

Thus, in order to remember the dates of the various events in this long history, which serve as starting points for the different periods, the synopsis-table at the end of this lecture will be found useful as it also gives the contemporary dates in the history of India.

(*b*) *Events connected with International history*

Some of the events mentioned above have not only been the cause of great social and political upheavals which marked the beginning of new eras, particularly in Iran, but they have also influenced the history

of the world, or, at least, that of the civilized nations in general. Of these, four great events are mentioned here:

1. *The Asian invasion of Alexander, the Great,* (B.C. 334), not only overthrew the Achæmenian Dynasty in Iran but it also changed the course of history in all the Middle-Eastern countries from Afghanistan to Egypt, and its effects have been felt even in Northern India.

2. *The onslaught of Islamic armies,* (A.D. 635). was responsible on the one hand for the break-up of the Sásánian empire and uprooting of the national culture of Iran, as well as the absorption of the possessions of the Byzantine rulers in Asia into the Arab world, and, on the other, it established another mighty empire which spread from the banks of the Indus to the shores of the Atlantic and from the Oxus to the Eastern regions of Africa. It opened up a new chapter in the histories of the then great nations of Mongolia, Europe (Iberian and Balkan Peninsulas), North Africa, Asia Minor, Iran and India.

3. *The incursion of the Mongols under Chingíz Khán and later on the Tartar inroads under Timur* extended their domination further to Western and Central Asia and even to the Middle-East and Europe. These invasions were one of the factors which gave birth to the modern civilization of Europe.

4. *The movement of the Slav races* towards the South, resulting in their conflict with Iran (A.D. 1807) was a warning to the Eastern nations, inasmuch as it created the Eastern Question and was responsible for the policy of "Balance of Power" in Europe. It set in motion new movements and ideologies, like Democracy, Fascism and Communism.

In all of these events Iran, in fact, served as a central stage where the conquerors of the East or the West played their vital roles. In most of these cases, like the expansion of the Mongol and Tartar races, the Iranian civilization and culture was carried over to other countries of the world.

(*c*) *The direct effect of some of the aforesaid events on the history of India.*

In the meanwhile, the political history of India, in its own turn, was influenced by many of the aforesaid events. It is, therefore, essential for the student of Indian history to study and examine them from the

point of view of the progress of history in general and the specific results of their impact on India. Events which may be said to have influenced the political history of India are, as follow:

1. *The expansion of the Hellenic Culture* under Alexander and the Seleucids (B.C. 330-A.D. 250).

2. *The establishment of the Ghaznavid* rule under Mahmud of Ghazna and his successors (A.D. 1000).

3. *The Mongol and the Tímúrid invasions* on Iran and India (A.D. 1397) paved the way for the Chaghatáy rule in India under Babur and his descendants (A.D. 1526).

4. *The Afghán invasion of Iran* (A.D. 1722) prepared the ground for the Abdali conquest of North-West India.

5. *The Russian attacks on Iran* (A.D. 1808) rang a warning to the British Government for the defence of India. It led to the creation of a series of strategic strong-holds in North-west India. It also led to the organization of a modern army in this country.

(d) *Influences of Indian events on the history of Iran*

It should not be misunderstood that it was always the political development in Iran which affected India. Conversely too, events taking place in India, especially movements of thought and culture, or even the commerce and economy of this country, wrought no insignificant influence on the history of Iran. A detailed discussion of such events or movements, in spite of the amount of interest involved, falls outside the scope of our present discourse. I would, however, mention a few of them as specimens and hope that the subject would be further studied and examined by the young scholars of India.

1. *The existence of the trade route between India and Europe, known as the "Silk Road"*. For centuries together, caravans laden with Indian merchandize (silk, spices, muslin etc.,) crossed Iran either by way of Persian Gulf and Hormuz or through Kabul and Herat on their way to countries in Asia Minor, Greece, Rome—even to Western Europe—upto A.D. 1453. Later, this route was completely forgotten owing to the construction of the Suez Canal.

2. *The birth of Buddhism in India* and its diffusion in Iran and Western Asia... (2nd century B.C.).

3. *The ascendency of the Tímúrids* in India who founded their government and court on Iranian pattern (A.D. 1526).

4. *The British supremacy in India* and the creation of a political and strategic line of defence in North-West India, as mentioned above.

(*e*) *Conclusion.*

This is a brief summary of the long drama enacted in your neighbourhood for over two and a half millennia. Some of the scenes were interesting and happy, and they appealed to our neighbours and friends, while others presented such horrible tragedies as have earned the sympathies and regrets of the bitterest enemies.

Also, this was the story of a nation which is not only your neighbour but belongs to the same stock and family of races as yourselves. Its annals constitute a separate and distinct chapter in the history of the world and are full of extraordinary events which embody lessons of wisdom and may serve as a guide to all who study them with an open mind. Long ago, Sa'adí, the great Iranian poet, recommended the study of this long story to every intelligent person. He said:

حدیث پادشاهان عجم را   حکایت نامه ضحاک و جم را
بخواند هوشمند نیک انجام   نشاید خیره کردن ضایع ایام
مگر کز خوی نیکان پند گیرند   وز آئین بدان عبرت پذیرند

The lore of the Kings of Iran
And the Book of Tales about Zahák and Jamshíd

Are read by intelligent persons of happy career
Who do not waste time in vain;

Maybe, they will follow the example of the virtuous
And take warning from the conduct of the vicious.

SYNOPSIS-TABLE OF LEADING DATES IN INDO-IRANIAN HISTORY

IRAN	INDIA
1. *Pre-Islamic Era.*	
Accession of Cyrus, the Great. The Achæmenian Dynasty founded .... 546 B.C.	Birth of Lord Mahavira .... B.C. 550
Death of Darius, the Great .... B.C. 486	Death of Lord Buddha .... B.C. 483 (?)
Alexander invades Asia .... B.C. 334	Chandragupta Mauriya banished from Pataliputra .... B.C. 325
Seleucids established in Iran .... B.C. 320	Seleukas defeated by Chandragupta Mauriya .... B.C. 305
The Ashk Dynasty founded by Ashk I .... B.C. 250	Asoka's Buddhist Mission under Mahinda arrives in Ceylon......... B.C. 250 (?)
Sásánian Dynasty founded A.D. 226	
Sásánians overthrown by Arab (Muslim) invaders (Battle of Qádisiyya) A.D. 637	Death of Harshavardhana .... A.D. 647
Death of Yazdigird III A.D. 651	
2. *Islamic Era.*	
A. Migration of Prophet Muḥammad from Mecca to Medina ...... A.D. 622	Persian Embassy visits the court of Pulakesin II Chalukya .... A.D. 625
Umayyad Caliphate founded in Damascus...A.D. 661	Hieun Tsang visits Deccan ...... A.D. 641
Abbasid Caliphate founded in Baghdad...A.D. 750	Rise of the Pala Dynasty in Bengal .... A.D. 750
Rise of Iranian Dynasties: 1. Ṣaffárids 2. Sámánids...A.D. 913	Rise of the Parihar and Rathor Dynasties in Kanauj.

IRAN	INDIA
3. Ghaznavids .... A.D. 1000	Maḥmúd defeats Jaipala .... A.D. 1001
4. Seljuqs ... A.D. 1055	Death of Raja Bhoj Parihar of Kanauj .... A.D. 1060
5. Khwárazm-sháhis ... A.D. 1157	Rise of Chauhans ...... A.D. 1163
B. *Decline of Islamic Culture and the Age of the Turkish Caliphate.*	
Invasion of Chingíz......... A.D. 1230	Iltutmish acknowledged Sulṭán of Delhi by the Caliph ... A.D. 1226
Invasion of Hulágú and sack of Baghdad........... A.D. 1258	Náṣiru'd-Dín Maḥmúd Sháh I (Slave) .... A.D. 1246-66
Tímúr invades Iran......... A.D. 1382	Sack of Delhi by Tímúr .... A.D. 1398
Constantinople conquered by Ottoman Turks......... A.D. 1453	Bahlúl Lúdí ...... acc. A.D. 1451
Sháh Ismá'íl I acc.......... A.D. 1500	Sikandar Lúdí ... acc. A.D. 1489
Nádir Sháh overthrows Ṣafavids .... A.D. 1735	Nádir Sháh sacks Delhi .... A.D. 1739
Qájár Dynasty founded... A.D. 1794	Death of Mahadji Sindhia A.D. 1794
3. *Contemporary Era.*	
End of Irano-Russian wars .... A.D. 1828	William Bentinck becomes Governor-General ... A.D. 1828
Constitutional Government declared .... A.D. 1906	Morley-Minto Reforms .... A.D. 1909

LECTURE II

LANGUAGE

(a) Definition and Scope.

(b) Importance and value of Persian in different periods of history.

(c) Old Persian.

(d) Middle Persian.

(e) Modern Persian.

(f) Summary.

(a) Definition and Scope

The beautiful and euphonic language known as Persian is now spoken in Iran, Afghánistán and Tájikistán (Central Asia). It has a very ancient origin. Scholars and philologists have traced its derivation upto 3,000 years from now. Their belief is supported with written evidence, which includes:

1. *The cuneiform inscriptions* discovered in Iran and adjoining countries which belong to the reign of Cyrus, the Great, and his successors. These were inscribed during the early days of the Achæmenian period (6th century B.C.), and are found in Iran at Persepolis and Pazargad (North of Shiraz), Bí-Sitún (North-West of Kirmánsháh) and Ganj-nameh (Hamadán) etc.

2. *The religious books of the Zoroastrians,* covering a period from the pre-Achæmenian era upto the 10th century A.D. Unfortunately, owing to the invasion of Alexander and the Dark Age following the rise of the Arsacids as well as the Arab conquest of Iran, most of these were destroyed.

The language of the inscriptions was a puzzle until recently. Although, now deciphered to a large degree, it is not yet fully penetrated. One hundred and eighty years ago, the then scholars of Europe began their research in the origin and derivation of Old Persian with the help of the languages spoken in Western Asia during that early period. The French scholar, Anquetil de Perron, who had also studied ancient Zoroastrian books, led these attempts.

As a result of these researches, it was discovered that Persian had branched off from a very ancient stock, known as the Indo-European

family of languages, which extended over a vast area, from Western China to the Atlantic Ocean.

(*b*) *The importance and value of Persian during different periods of history*

Not only from the point of view of the history of Modern Persian, but also in order to get a sound knowledge of the linguistic history of India, it is necessary to study the Old and the Modern Persian (فرس قدیم و جدید) which were intimately connected with the languages of India and Central Asia from the third millennium B.C. to the tenth century A.D.

The cause of this relationship may be sought in the fact that all along this long period, whenever Iranian tribes migrated from one place to another, or invaded a country, they carried their language along with them. Later, however, the circle of Persian gradually began to narrow down so much so that it is now confined to Iran proper and its neighbourhood *i.e.*, Afghánistán, Tájikistán, Iraq and Caucasia.

During the Achæmenian period, and even before their advent, under the rule of the Medes, for about five centuries (B.C. 700-300), Old Persian was the language of the people of that vast area. Also during the Arsacid (Parthian) period (B.C. 250-A.D. 200), the same language continued to exist with certain modifications.

The law of evolution is operative in the case of all living beings. Hence, Old Persian too, a living language, was subjected to a great deal of change by the new forces which had appeared with the passage of time. Under the Arsacid rule, therefore, the Middle Persian or Pahlaví was born. It was of the same origin and stock as Old Persian but reflected the linguistic developments of the period. Still later, during the Sásánian epoch, the Arsacid Pahlaví (پہلوی اشکانی) became obsolete and was transformed into what is known as Sásánian Pahlaví (پہلوی ساسانی).

In the 7th century A.D. the Pahlaví language had to face the Arab (Muslim) invasion. Consequently, it was considerably influenced by Arabic and slowly absorbed thousands of new words, terms, idioms and rules of Grammar, brought into Iran by the Arabs. The influence of this Semitic language on Pahlaví, an old Aryan language, has been ever growing. During the last 1,350 years Persian has inclined more and more towards Arabic. A study of the Persian works belonging to the early days of Islamic supremacy over Iran (9th and 10th centuries A.D.) will reveal that there is not much difference between the language of that period and the one spoken and written in Iran today, except that

the former contained a greater element of purely Persian words, terms and usages than is the case today.

In this respect, Persian bears a marked resemblance to English. Like English, an inter-mixture of the Anglo-Saxon (Germanic languages) with Latin and Greek, Persian also is a combination of Middle Persian (Sásánian Pahlaví) and Arabic. In other words, Old Persian of the Achæmenian Period may be defined as the mother of the Middle Persian, which in its own turn, gave birth to Modern Persian. Fortunately abundant material in Old and Middle Persian is available to show this development.

(c) *Old Persian*

1. In the first place, there are the Achæmenian inscriptions. However much the difficulty in correctly deciphering them, whatever is so far known holds out that this ancient language possessed such qualities as fineness, lucidity and clarity.

In one of the texts of the document usually quoted as the *Daiva Inscription,* Xerxes (Xsayársá-d. B.C. 486) records his religious activities:

> "uta antar aitá dahyáva áha yadá tya paruvam daivá ayadiy pasáva vašná A(h)uramazdahá adam avam daiva-dánam viyakanam uta patiyazbayam daivá má yadiyaiša yadáyá paruvam daivá ayadiy avada adam A(h)uramazdám ayadaiy."

Translation

> And within these provinces there was (a place) where formerly false Gods (daiva) were worshipped. Then by the will of Ahura Mazda I dug down that House of False Gods and I proclaimed: Thou shall not worship the false gods. Where the false gods were formerly worshipped, there I worshipped Ahura Mazda.[1]

Here we meet the famous words *daiva–* 'false god, demon'; the later *dēv* (now *dīv* "دیو"); the *yad–* 'worship', the true Persian form of the word "*yaz*" یزدان which serves to express worship in Zoroastrian texts.[2]

2. Secondly, other sources of information which offer the student even more materials for study and research are the religious books of the Zoroastrians. "We who visit the ancient shrine of Mithras on the

1 A. J. Arberry, *The Legacy of Persia,* article on 'The Persian Language' by H. W. Bailey, Oxford, 1953, p. 180.

2 *Ibid.,* p. 180.

Roman Wall in northern England are naturally as interested as the Indians who read of Mithra in their most ancient book or of Mihira in the later accounts of the Saka invaders of India, to see what the ancient Zoroastrian priests said of their 'yazata' (izad, 'worshipful being'), Mithra. In the collection of sacred poems, the book of the Yashts in the Avesta, the following verses occur in honour of Mithra:

Miθrəm vouru.gaoyaoitīm yazamaide
yō paoiryō mainyavō yazatō
tarō Harąm āsnaoiti paurva.naēmāt̰
aməšahe hū yat̰ aurvat̰.aspahe
yō paoiryō zaranyō.pīsō
srīrå barəšnava gərəwnāiti
aδāt̰ vīspəm ādiδāiti airyō.šayanəm səvištō

Translation

We worship Mithra, possessor of broad pastures, who, as first, a worshipful being of the spiritual world, comes towards us over the Hará mountain before the swift-horsed sun immortal; who, as first, grasps the splendid gold-decked mountain tops, thence gazes upon all the Aryan home, he the most mighty one."[1]

It should be remembered that about the same time as Old Persian was spoken in western and southern Iran, another language prevailed in the eastern and north-eastern parts of the country. It was parallel to Sanskrit and Old Persian and the three existed as sister languages. This language is called, the Avestan language. as the *Avesta,* the sacred book of the Iranian Prophet, Zarathushtra, is in that language.

It is sufficient to point out that the Avestan language has a close relation with Sanskrit. This relationship is well apparent in the following common stems: the words *pitar*— 'father' "پدر" *mátar*— 'mother' "مادر" *áp*— 'water' "آب" *kar*— 'to make' "کردن" *râm*— 'to rest' "آرمیدن" *puθra*— 'son' "پور" *hazaŋra*— 'thousand' "هزار" are identical with the Old Indian texts. Also Indian '*asvam*'— horse and Iranian *aspō* "اسپ"[2]

Now, after the hard study and research for nearly two centuries, philologists have arrived at the conclusion that Old Persian and Sanskrit are two sister languages, having branched off from a common and very

1 *The Legacy of Persia,* p. 181.
2 *Ibid.,* p. 182.

ancient stock of Indo-European languages: Germanic, Slavonic and Hellenic languages also belong to this family.

(d) Middle Persian

During the ascendency of the Arsacids, Old Persian underwent a series of changes and developed into the Pahlaví language or Middle Persian. A comparative study of the texts relating to Manichæanism[1] and Christianity (the manuscripts belonging to the Eastern Church) as well as the Sughdí dialect (prevalent in the valley near Samarqand) has led the philologists to identify Arsacid Pahlaví as being different from the language preceding it during the Achæmenian period, *i.e.*, Old Persian or the one which followed it during the Sásánian epoch, *i.e.*, Sásánian Pahlaví. Identification of this language has been further facilitated by the discovery of new religious (Manichæan) texts and archæological finds in recent years; especially, the remains excavated in Central Asia, in the neighbourhood of Samarqand and Khwárazm as well as several manuscripts preserved in European libraries or in India among the Parsi community. These documents also throw a flood-light of information on the language of the Sásánians, *i.e.*, the Sásánian Pahlaví, which succeeded the Arsacid Pahlaví. So, Persian words which exist today have undergone a series of changes during the last 2,500 years; for example, the Old Persian word 'tapayati' which means 'to radiate light' becomes 'tápét' in Arsacid Pahlaví and 'tafaston' or 'tabid' in Sásánian Pahlaví. In Modern Persian it is 'tábesh' and 'tabeedan' تابیدن - تابش.[2]

By the end of the Sásánian Period (6th and 7th centuries A.D.) the Pahlaví language had attained so much perfection that even at that time it excelled such Iranian languages of today as Kurdi and Pushto, by having an elaborate literature, *i.e.*, Pahlaví possesses important literary heritage and each of the works now available is of immense literary and historical value and high perfection.[3]

The Pahlaví writings which have descended to us are mainly of three kinds:

(1) Zoroastrian scriptures and books, (2) Rock inscriptions and (3) Sásánian coins carrying names and titles of the rulers of that Dynasty.

Similarly, the Persian books written during the early Islamic era (immediately suceeding the Arab invasion of Iran) throw sufficient light on the progress of Pahlaví.

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1 Manichæanism is the religion of Mani or Manes, an Iranian Prophet known as "the Ambassador of Light". Manichæanism spread from Babylonia and during the fourth century it was widely influential in the Empire ....*Encyc. Brit.*

2 *The Legacy of Persia*, p. 186.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 186.

(*e*) *Modern Persian*

But, from the 3rd century A.H./9th century A.D. onwards, Pahlaví began to develop into Modern Persian. New technical terms and idioms were borrowed from Arabic. Gradually, the phonetics and pronunciation of words also underwent a change. Also a new alphabet and orthography were introduced. The Arabic script which succeeded the Pahlaví is still the prevalent script in Iran.

After three centuries of amalgamation, Modern Persian crystallized into the form of a distinct language at the end of the 3rd century A.H. Also during this century, when the expansion of the Arabic language was arrested and local dynasties had founded independent kingdoms in Iran, a new national literature was developed.

Under the Ṣaffárids, who came into power in Sístán (A.D. 850), and their contemporaries, the Sámánids, who established themselves in Bukhárá in Central Asia (A.D. 900), the foundations of the prose and poetry of Modern Persian were laid. The history of Persian literature actually dates from this period. Also the period was ornamented by the presence of such poets as Rúdakí of Bukhárá, the famous Persian poet who is known as the Father of Persian poetry (1st half of the 10th century A.D.). Such works as the *Kalíla va Dimna* (orig. Karataka and Damanaka, a fable in the Pañchatantra) which was earlier translated from Pahlaví (*Kalílak-o-Dimnak*) into Arabic (A.D. 750) was again rendered into Persian (12th century A.D.).

Since Persian prose and poetry will be the subject of my later lectures, it is sufficient to conclude here after mentioning two Persian texts, written in the 10th and the 12th centuries, respectively. Both of them were written in Eastern Iran. It will be noticed that simplicity and purity of language are the chief qualities of the first text; while the second text will show how new Arabic words and terms were amalgamated. Both of the texts relate to the same subject, namely, how the *Kalíla va Dimna* was taken to Iran from India and translated first into Pahlaví and later into Arabic. I have purposely selected this theme as it is a very famous topic in Indo-Iranian relations.

1. *Specimen of Persian language in the 10th century A.D.*

from the "*Sháhnáma*"

من امروز در دفتر هندوان　　همی بنگریدم بروشن روان
نبشته چنین بد که در کوه هند　　گیاهیست رخشان چو رومی پرند
چو بر مرده بپراگنی بیگمان　　سخنگوی گردد هم اندر زمان
بگویم کنون آنچه ما را رسید　　دل راد باید که دانا شنید
بدانش بود بیگمان زنده مرد　　خنك رنج بردار پاینده مرد
چو مردم ز دانائی آمد ستوه　　گیا چون کلیاه است و دانش چو کوه

کتابی بدانش نماینده راه   بیابی چو جوئی تو از گنج شاه
ز ره چون رسید اندر آن بارگاه   نیایش کنان رفت نزدیک شاه
بدو گفت شاه ای پسندیده مرد   کلیله روان مرا زنده کرد
نبشتندهٔ نامه خسروی   نبد آنزمان خط بجز پهلوی
چنین تا بتازی سخن راندند   از آن پهلوانی همی خواندند
چو هارون[1] جهان روشن و تازه کرد   چنین نامه بر دیگر اندازه کرد
کلیلهٔ بتازی شد از پهلوی   بدینسان که اکنون همی بشنوی[2]

2. *Specimen of Persian language during the 12th century A.D.*

From the "*Kalíla va Dimna-i-Bahrám Sháhí*"

یکی را از براهمهٔ هند پرسیدند که میگویند بجانب هندوستان کوههاست و در وی داروها میروید که مرده بدان زنده میشود طریق بدست آمدن آن چه باشد · جواب داد که .... این سخن از اشارات و رموز متقدمان است و از آن کوه ها علما را خواسته اند و آن داروها سخن ایشان را و مردگان جاهلان را که بسماع آن زنده شوند و بسمت علم حیات ابد یابند و این سخن را مجموعه‌ایست که آنرا کلیله و دمنه خوانند و در خزائن ملوك هند باشد اگر بدست توانی آوردن این غرض بحصول پیوندد و محاسن این کتاب را نهایت نیست ·

در نوبت ابو جعفر منصور........ که دوم خلیفه بوده است از خاندان عم مصطفی (ص) ابن المقفع آنرا از زبان پهلوی بلغت تازی ترجمه کرد و آن پادشاه بدان اقبالی تمام نمود[3] ·

(f) Summary

Persian language has passed through five stages:

1. *The very ancient Persian of the Medes.* It preceded the Achæmenian Period and was spoken in Western Iran. It was the language of the people during the rule of the Medes in the district of Hagmatana (Hamadán). Apparently, no distinct trace of it has so far been discovered.

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1 It may be noted that Firdawsí has confused the name of Hárún, the famous 'Abbasid Caliph with that of his grandfather Abú Ja'far Mansúr, who encouraged the translation of *Kalíla va Dimna* from Pahlaví into Arabic.

2 *Sháhnáma,* The reign of Anúshírwán.

3 *Kalíla va Dimna,* ed. by Mírzá 'Abdu'l-'Azím Khán Qaríb Garakání p. 17 and p. 18, Teheran, A.H. 1351.

2. *The Avestan Language,* also called the language of the "Zend and Avesta". This language existed in Iran before the advent of the Achæmenian Dynasty and was spoken in Eastern parts of the country. Some of the *Gáthás* of Zoroaster, in the language, have been preserved. The Gathas consist of hymns, perhaps in some dialect of Eastern Iran, written in a particular script and alphabet of its own. The book of the *Gáthás* is the only extant scripture of the Zoroastrians. The *Zend* is the commentary on it in Pahlaví and the *Pá-Zend* was later written in Modern Persian as a commentary on the *Zend*.

The Avestan language is parallel to Sanskrit and Old Persian, and the three are sister languages.

3. *Old Persian,* the language spoken by the Achæmenians in Southern Iran, *i.e.,* Fars (Persia proper). All the inscriptions of the period are in this language and are inscribed in cuneiform script on rocks, stone slabs used in palaces and other monuments as well as on coins and seals.

The language was spoken by the great Iranian kings like Cyrus and Darius. It predominated over the Avestan language afterwards.

4. *Pahlaví,* the language of the Arsacids and the Sásánians, grew and developed under the Parthians and retained its name under the Sásánians. The Arabs called it Pahlaví. During the Sásánian period it spread over the whole of Iran and was particularly popular in the central and southern parts of the country.

The word Pahlaví has stayed in India in 'Pahlavas'. Also such words as پہلوانی - سخن گفتن پہلوی - گلبانگ پہلوی are reminiscent of it in Modern Persian literature.

Among the characteristics of Pahlaví is the existence of *Huzvárish* or ideogram in it. A word belonging to one of the classical languages of Semitic, Assyrian, Aramaic or Himyarite (Mesopotamian) origin was written in Pahlaví texts in the original form, but while reading the text, its Pahlaví interpretation (and not the written word) was pronounced, *e.g.* the word 'Shahinsháh', the traditional title of an Iranian monarch, was written in Pahlaví as *Malkán-Malká,* i.e., the Assyrian equivalent to the Arabic *'Malíkul-Mulúk'*; but, while reading, its Pahlaví interpretation 'Sháhán-sháh' was pronounced and not *Malkán-Malká.*

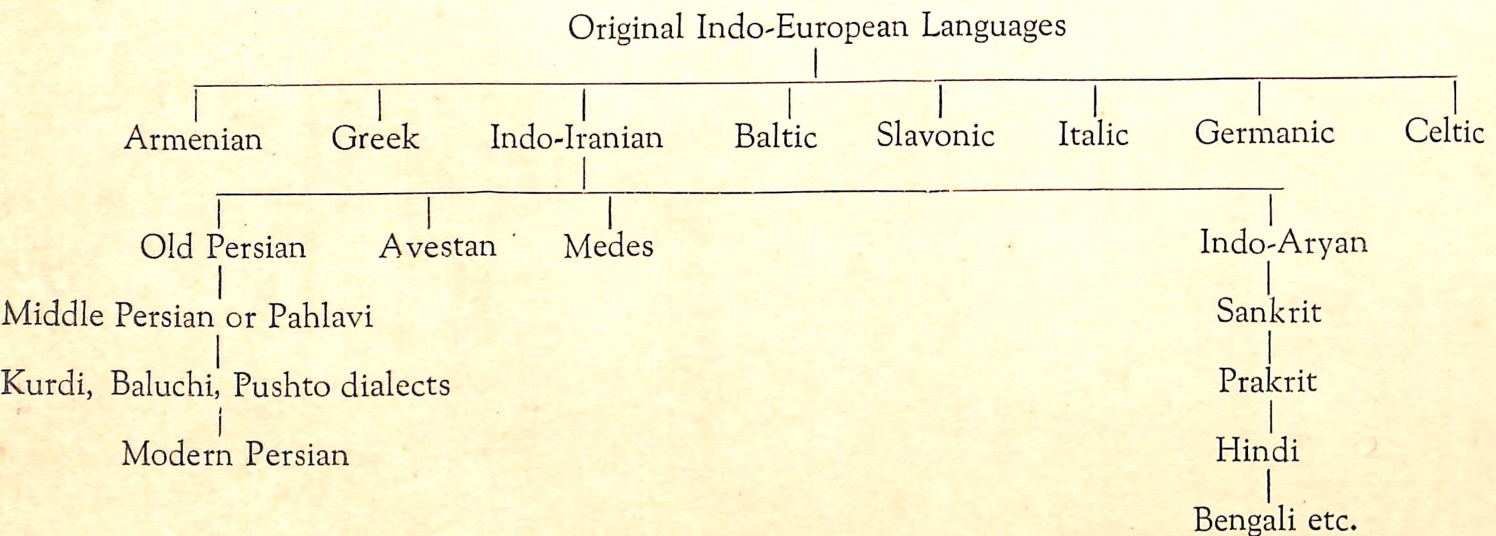
Several books and letters of Pahlaví are still extant but they cannot be read today without difficulty.

5. *Modern Persian,* or the language spoken by the present inhabitants of the Iranian plateau. It came into existence in the second

part of the Iranian history, *i.e.*, the Islamic Era. It is written in the Arabic script. The language has now a history of a millennium, reckoned from the time when Rúdakí of Bukhárá first sang his odes or Firdawsí composed the *Sháhnáma*. During this long period it has undergone very little change and the books written in this language during the 9th century A.D. are still easily intelligible.



CHART SHOWING THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERSIAN AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ARYAN LANGUAGUES.



LECTURE III

PRE-ISLAMIC PROSE

(1) *Old Persian.*

Achæmenian Period and preceding centuries.

(a) The *Avesta:* General remarks. Parts of the *Avesta.* Discovery and modern translations of the *Avesta.*

(b) Rock Inscriptions: Bí-Sitún Inscription of Darius the Great.

(2) *Middle Persian or Pahlaví.*

(a) Existing documents: Religious, ethical and historical works.

(b) Translation from Pahlaví into Arabic: at-Ṭabarí, Ibnu'l-Muqaffa', Firdawsí, *Sháhnáma, Khudháy-Námak.*

(c) Specimen of Pahlaví Literature: *Jávídán Khirad.*

(1) *Old Persian.* (*Achæmenian Period and preceding centuries*).

The oldest document of the prose and poetry of Iran is contained in the *Avesta,* the Scripture attributed to Zarathushtra, the celebrated Prophet of Iran. The details of the biography of this Thinker-Prophet are not known, but it is guessed that he lived during the 7th century B.C.

(*a*) *The Avesta.*

The *Avesta* is in an old dialect of the east of Iran, current in that ancient time. It is parallel to Old Persian and Sanskrit and the three are considered as sister languages. Very probably, this dialect was spoken in the region of Khurásán (خراسان).

The *Avesta* is a collection of prayers and religious teachings. It was a part of a large book. The other portions of the original scripture were destroyed by the cruel hands of time. It is said that the present *Avesta* is only one-fourth of the book which apparently existed until the 10th century A.D.

The actual *Avesta* consists of several parts, the most important being:

1. The *Yasnas* (يسناها)
2. The *Yashts* (يشتها)

The first contains some hymns and chants. The second is a collection of prayers and invocations to the gods of ancient Iran.

There is a third part of the *Avesta,* viz., the Vendidâd (وندیداد) which contains formulæ of worship and religious rites. Lastly, there are some miscellaneous fragments which are known as the *Khurda-Avesta* (خرده اوستا)

For the first time, a French orientalist, Anquetil du Perron, discovered the importance of the book in 1771 and translated it into French. Thus he introduced it to the notice of the scholars.

(*b*) *Rock Inscriptions.*

Achæmenian Kings desirous to preserve their names to the posterity, produced a number of rock inscriptions in cuneiform. Consequently a great deal of the prose language of this age is accessible in our time.

As regards the specimen of this prose, the following fragment from a rock inscription at Bí-sitún, a few miles from Kirmánsháh, is most representative of the style of the age. It is written in the cuneiform script and was first deciphered by Sir Henry Rawlinson during 1837-43. It was inscribed at the orders of Darius, the Great (داریوش کبیر) (B.C. 520) in three contemporary languages viz., Babylonian, Elamite and Old Persian. The inscription has remained safe from the interference of the irresponsible meddlers as it was inscribed at a considerable height on a solid rock. It would be interesting to note that this was an inscription written in 3 languages. As such, it provided the clue to the discovery of the cuneiform alphabet and also to the decipherment of all other inscriptions of the epoch.

The inscription is not only a historical document, but it is also considered as a literary fragment. A scholar has said:

"Yet for the linguistic specialist, as for the historian, these early Achæmenian monuments are exceedingly precious."[1]

I quote below the translation of a portion of the inscription, if not its original text, to give you some idea of the trend and style of Achæmenian prose:

> "Says Darius the King: The kingdom which had been alienated from our house, that I restored: in its place did I establish it: as [it was] before, so I made it: the temples which Gaumâta the Magian overthrew I restored to the people, the markets, and the flocks, and the dwellings according to clans which Gaumâta the Magian had taken away from them. I established the people in their [former]

1 Legacy of Persia, p. 174.

places, Persia, Media, and the other provinces. Thus did I restore that which had been taken away as it was before: by the Grace of Ahuramazda have I done this, I laboured until I restored this our clan to its position as it was before, so, by the Grace of Ahuramazda, did I restore our clan as [it was] when Gaumâta the Magian had not eaten it up. Says Darius the King: This is what I did when I became king.[1]"

(2) *Middle Persian or Pahlaví.*

Pahlaví came into existence during the Parthian or Arsacid Period (B.C. 250/A.D. 226). Under the Sásánian rule (دورہ ساسانیان) (A.D. 226-640), it developed and attained to perfection and became possessed of a brilliant literature. This language and literature continued to exist in some secluded parts of Iran for almost three centuries after the Arab invasion. Afterwards, its use was mostly confined to a group of Iranian emigrants who fled to South-West India and settled in Gujrat in the 7th or 8th century A.D., when Iran was ravaged by the Arab armies. It still exists among them in some degree.

Also, the documents of the language belonging to this period and extending over thirteen centuries (3rd century B.C. to 10th century A.D.) are scattered in the form of inscriptions, coins, seals, books and other miscellaneous fragments.[2]

(*a*) *Existing Documents.*

The existing Pahlaví literature may roughly be classified under four heads:

(1) The translation of the *Avesta* known as the *"Zend"* (زنداوستا)

(2) Religious books, among which the *Dinkart* or "Acts of Religion" is the most important and well-known. It contains vast information about the manners, customs, traditions, rites and literature of the Zoroastrians, or, the Mazda-worshipers. It is curious that this collection was compiled in the 9th century A.D. *i.e.*, after 250 years of the Arab (Muslim) occupation of Iran.

(3) Books on history, tales etc. Some of them, for example, the *Dying Injunctions* (وصایا) or the *Story of Khusraw Kawádhán* (خسرو قبادان) and the *Kárnámak-i-Artakhshír-i-Pápakán* (کارنامك اردشیر پاپکان) exist to this day in entirety. The latter gives the biography of the founder of the Sásánian Dynasty.

1 E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia,* Cambridge, 1929, Vol. I. p. 32.
2 *Ibid.,* Vol. I. p. 103 *et Seqq.*

(4) Other miscellaneous works on geography, traditions and literature etc.

These books which form the bulk of Pahlaví literature have attracted the attention of orientalists from the early 19th century onwards. German orientalists have devoted a special attention to the translation, annotation and edition of Pahlaví books. In this respect, special mention may be made of Prof. Theodore Nöldeke, the celebrated German orientalist, who took great pains in the study of Pahlaví books. His works are meritorious and reliable.

(*b*) *Translations from Pahlaví into Arabic.*

On the other hand, during the first four centuries of the Islamic era (7th-10th century A.D.) many Pahlaví books were translated into Arabic by Iranians who had complete mastery over the two languages. Some of their works are fortunately still existing.

Among the most eminent translators of the period was Aṭ-Ṭabarí (الطبری) (d. A.H. 310/A.D. 923), the author of the two well-known books on History and Exegesis. He was preceded by Ibnu'l-Muqaffa' (d. A.H. 142/A.D. 760) who translated a number of Pahlaví books into Arabic. The book *Kalíla va Dimna* (کلیله و دمنه) rendered earlier into Pahlaví from the Sanskrit (Karataka and Damanaka) by a certain Persian physician Burzúya (برزویه) was also translated by him into Arabic. Fortunately, this book has survived without any loss or defect[1].

Lastly, there was a Pahlaví work viz., *Khwatáy-e-Námak or Khudáy-Námak* (خدای نامک) rendered later into Persian poetry, and incorporated along with other Pahlaví sources, by Abu'l-Qásim Firdawsí in his great epic now known as *Sháhnáma-i-Firdawsí*. Unfortunately the *Khudáy-Náma* is extinct now. It, however, contained the legends of ancient Iran and though the text has been lost, its contents and substance have been entirely preserved for us with great care and attention by Firdawsí in his *Sháhnáma,* which is one of the great epic poems of the world. It contains the legendary history of ancient Iran, unmentioned in any other source with so much detail.

(*c*) *Specimen of Pahlaví Literature.*

I regret that, time does not permit me to quote at length specimens from Pahlaví texts, but those interested may refer to the Pahlaví texts published in Bombay by Messrs Ankelasaria, Dinshaw and other Parsi scholars as well as those published in Europe by French, German and English orientalists.

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1 References to these translations have often been made in these lectures.

I would, however, quote a passage from the book *"Jávídán Khirad"*, (جاویدان خرد *i.e.* "Eternal Wisdom"), originally in Pahlaví and translated into Arabic by Ḥasan b. Sahl (d. A.H. 236), the Vizier of Al-Ma'mún (d. A.D. 813)[1].

The fragment is representative of the ethical literature of the period. If our specimen lacks the actual words of Pahlaví as they would have sounded, it represents the lively ideas and moral teachings of the time. The book contains the Admonitions of Húshang, the Píshdádí (هوشنگ پیشدادی) to his son.[2] It says:

(۱) آغاز و انجام بسوی یزدان پاك است و یاری از اوست . ستایش اورا سزاست . هر آنکو آغاز را شناخت ستایش پیشه کرد و آنکه از انجام آگاهی یافت بنده شد . هر که یاری از او دانست فروتن گشت . کسی که از داد و دهش وی آگاه شد به بندگی گردن نهاد و از سرکشی چشم پوشید .

(۲) بهترین چیزیکه از خدا به بنده رسد دانش این جهان و آمرزش آن جهانست . خوشترین آرزوئیکه بنده از خدا دارد تندرستی است . نیکوترین سخنان ستایش یزدان پاك است .

(۳) خوی بندگان یزدان بچهار پایه پسندیده برجاست : دانش، بردباری، پاکدامنی و داد . دانش به نیکوئی برای دست یافتن به نیکوئیست . و دانش به بدکاری برای پرهیز از آنست . دانش و کردار چون جان و تنند . دانش بیخ است و کردار بر . دانش پدر است و کردار پسر . دانش بی کردار پسندیده نباشد و کردار بی دانش بانجام نرسد .

(۴) توانگری در بی‌نیازیست . آسایش در گوشه نشینی است . آزادی گذشتن از خواهشهای زیانکار . راستی در درستکاری و بزرگواری در بیخواهشی .

(۵) برون آور آز منشی را از دل خود تا باز شود بند پای تو و آسایش یابد تن تو . ستمکار پشیمان است اگرچه ستایشش کنند و ستمکش آسوده است اگرچه سرزنشش نمایند .

(۶) مردنت نزدیك است و در دست تو نیست . روز و شب به تندی در گذرند دمی نگذرد که روزگار بگذرد . گرامی دار مرگ خود را و پیوسته نگران باش اورا . هنگامیکه آسایش تن با تو خو کرد از مرگ بیندیش . دمیکه از آسایش خشنود گردی اندوهگین باش از رنج که بازگشت آسایش بسوی اوست .

1 *Al-Ḥikmatu'l-Khálidah,* Cairo, 1952; also *Pársiy-i-Naghz, Teheran,* 1330.
2 Jalálu'd-Dín Mírzá, *Náma-i-Khusrawán,* Teheran.

(۷) نه بآرزو بی نیاز توان شد، نه بخود آرائی جوان، نه بدارو تندرست .
اگر تو را چهار چیز باشد در گیتی برخوردار خواهی بود : نانی که از کار خود
بدست آری، پایداری در دوستی، راستگوئی و پاکدامنی .

Translation.

1. The beginning and the end rest in God and all help is forthcoming from Him. He is worthy of praise. One who comprehended the beginning took to practise His praise and one who became aware of the end, became His slave. One who knew that help came (only) from Him, became humble. Or who came to know of his benevolence and generosity, submitted to His Mastership and renounced pride.

2. The best thing that comes to man from God is the knowledge of this world and forgiveness in the other. The happiest desire of man from God is health; the most profound sayings are those in praise of God.

3. The character of the servants of God is based on four praiseworthy principles: knowledge, forbearance, chastity, justice; knowledge of virtue to acquire it; knowledge of vice to keep away from it. Knowledge and action are like the soul and the body. Knowledge is root and action is the fruit. Knowledge is the father and action is the son. Knowledge without action would not be admirable; action without knowledge would lead to nowhere.

4. Richness lies in contentment; peace is in seclusion; freedom in emancipation from desires; truthfulness in honesty; greatness in having no desire.

5. Discard lustfulness from thy heart, so that thy feet may be unfettered and thy body restful. The oppressive is ashamed of himself, though he be praised, and the oppressed is contented, even though he be rebuked.

6. Thy death is approaching and it is not in thy control; the day and the night are fast passing away. Not a moment is past without the time stealing away. Honour thy death and always be prepared for it. When thy body gets used to comfort, remember thy death; while thou art happy with thy pleasures, thou shouldst be sorrowful for the pain that always follows them.

7. Neither desire could be got rid of nor self-adoration of the youth; nor can medicine bring health; if thou hast three things, thou wouldst be successful in the world: the bread of thy sweat, steadfastness in friendship, truthfulness and chastity.

So, dear friends, this beautiful language has an elaborate and old history. It was first given the name of *Perses* by the Greeks, Furs (لغت الفرس) by the Arabs and later it came to be known as "Persian" in the European languages. Its name is derived from the word Fárs (فارس) or the original name of the plains situated at 30 miles north of Shíráz and now known as Merv-Dasht. The historical town of Istakhr (استخر) effaced in the 3rd century A.H., was situated in this plain.

The language has an ancient origin, having descended from the old stock of the Indo-European languages. The birth of the language was soon followed by the appearance of a fine literature both in prose and poetry, which speaks well of the delicate taste and poetic disposition of its creators.

As I have said, from the language of the Medes, or the ancient dialect of the inhabitants of North-West Iran and from the Avestan language *i.e.*, the dialect spoken in North-East Iran, only the fragments of the great and celebrated book, the *Avesta*, have remained. But, of Pahlaví or the language of Fars, *i.e.*, the dialect originally spoken in Southern Iran and later expanded over the whole of the country, more numerous documents have existed. Pahlaví had attained a high degree of perfection even in those early days, and in the words of H. W. Bailey, a well-known contemporary linguist and orientalist, "by the end of the Sásánid period in the 7th Christian century Persian had evolved more fully than the Pashto of Afghánistán at the present day."[1]

It is about this sweet language and its attractive hymns that even after seven centuries of the downfall of the ancient culture of Iran, Khwája Ḥáfiz Shírází felt himself constrained to bestow abundant praise on it in his verses:

بلبل بشاخ سرو بگلبانگ پهلوی   میخواند دوش درس مقامات معنوی
مرغان باغ قافیه سنجند و بذله گوی   تا خواجه می خورد بغزلهاي پهلوی

Unfortunately, the vicissitudes of time and great upheavals have

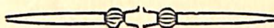
1 *Legacy of Persia*, p. 174.

almost eradicated this lovely literature which was the purest product of the Iranian mind. However, since the nation was possessed of a great vital force, it braved these adversities successfully.

It is very difficult for the students of Persian literature to extract any extensive literature, either prose or poetry, from the stray remains which have existed from the pre-Islamic days. These remains are just sufficient to help a philologist in his researches on the ancient languages.

For the students of philology in India who keenly want to study modern Indian languages and to know how much they have been influenced by Iranian languages, it is very desirable and also necessary that they should study the Pahlaví works which are largely available in Bombay.

I should like to end my present lecture just here and apologize for its shortcomings, as the time is short and the subject is very extensive.



LECTURE IV

ISLAMIC PROSE

I. *Persian prose during the 1st part of the Islamic era.*

Pre-Mongol Invasion Prose: Period of birth and progress.

(a) The development of prose.

(b) Contribution of the Iranians to the Arabic literature.

(c) The birth-place of Persian prose.

(d) The chief characteristics of Persian prose during pre-Mongol period.

(e) Development and perfection of prose during the period.

(f) Two specimens from the beginning and the end of the period respectively.

II. *Persian prose during the 2nd part of the Islamic era.*

Post-Mongol invasion prose: *Period of stagnation and decline.*

(a) Scope of the period.

(b) Political conditions and their effect on the literature of the period.

(c) New developments in prose.

(d) Subjects covered by the prose literature of the period:

1. History, 2. Religious books, 3. Philosophical, mystic and ethical works, 4. Miscellaneous books.

(e) A select bibliography of the prose works of this period: A. History, B. Religious books, C. Ethics, Essays etc. D. Books written in India.

III. *Persian prose during the 3rd part of the Islamic era.*

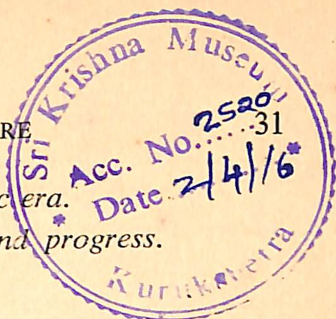
Contemporary prose.

(a) The dawn of the era.

(b) Its characteristics.

(c) Influence of Western culture.

(d) The chief characteristics of contemporary prose.



I. *Persian prose during the 1st part of the Islamic era.*
Pre-Mongol invasion prose: period of birth and progress.

(*a*) The development of prose.

For three centuries (7th, 8th and 9th century A.D.) following the Arab invasion of Iran, the history of this country is rather dark. During this period, the Arabs, racially a Semitic people, intermingled with the Aryan Iranians. As a result of this intercourse, there appeared a new race, a new language and literature; thus a fresh chapter was opened in the long history of Iran.

As I explained in the first lecture, this period, politically as well as from the point of view of literature, may be divided into two distinct parts:

(1) Part one, relating to the Irano-Arab intercourse.

(2) Part two, beginning with the Mongol invasion of Iran.

The first part may be called the period of the rise, and the second, the period of the decline of Islamic culture. During the first part, signs of growth, development and progress are visible and the second shows marks of stagnation and decline.

During this part of history, coinciding with the appearance of an Irano-Arab race, Modern Persian was born. It was the outcome of the intermingling of the Arabic and the Pahlaví languages. During the 10th century A.D., the intermixture attained to perfection and its full form. It yielded an immortal literature which possesses an eminent position among the literatures of the world. Its masterpieces are yet reckoned as gems of the literary productions of mankind.

Though the Caliphate in Baghdad continued to enjoy its central position, mostly politically and in spiritual matters in general, throughout this period, independent kingdoms were nevertheless founded almost all over Iran in succession to each other. Most of the rulers of those kingdoms were patrons of learning and especially encouraged the growth and development of poetry and, later on, also of prose.

(*b*) *Contribution of Iranians to Arabic literature.*

The Arabic language being the medium of religious instructions and the means for the dissemination of scientific, philosophic and theological ideas, it was enriched, during the period, with valuable contributions by Iranian writers and scholars. After their settlement in the civilized cities of Iran and Syria, the Arab bedouins sought the help of the city-dwelling Iranians in almost every sphere of social and

cultural life. Hence for four centuries (7th—10th century A.D.) the Iranians not only wrote innumerable books in Arabic but they also ran the administration of the Arab states. Even on linguistic subjects pertaining to the Arabic language, like lexicography (علم لغت), grammar (صرف و نحو), rhetoric (معاني و بيان), prosody (عروض), essay-writing (مقامات) etc., Iranians held the authority. Similarly, the basic subjects of the Islamic studies, such as Exegesis (تفسير), Tradition (حديث), Theology (كلام), Jurisprudence (فقه), etc., were founded on works produced by Iranians. A complete list of the Iranian scholars who wrote in Arabic on these subjects would be too long for my present discourse.[1]

(*c*) *The birth-place of Persian prose.*

Modern Persian literature and language first developed in the eastern regions of Iran and Central Asia. As we proceed towards the west, nearer to Baghdad, we gradually find the influence of Arabic growing more and more pronounced. As such, the first stage of the formulation and growth of Persian prose may be sought in Transoxiana (ماوراء النهر) and, later on, in Sístán and Khurásán (سيستان و خراسان). During the 4th century A.H./10th century A.D., the progress of Persian in these regions was remarkable. The next three centuries (5th, 6th and 7th century A.H.), however, witnessed the perfection of this language and literature in south and west Iran *i.e.,* in Fars and Iraq.

In the 3rd century A.H., two independent kingdoms came into existence, firstly in Sístán in A.D. 872 and later in Bukhárá in A.D. 903. The former, *i.e.,* the Kingdom of Sístán, was founded by the Ṣaffárid dynasty of Sístán (صفاريان), and the latter, *i.e.,* the Kingdom of Bukhárá, by the Sámánids (سامانيان) of Transoxiana and Khurásán.

Both of these districts were the cradle of the newly-born Persian prose and poetry. The prose of this period still contained a great deal of the existing Pahlaví words, terms and usages, and even the construction of sentences of the pre-Arab days is noticeable in it. Some prose works of this period have fortunately survived. Some manuscripts of this period also have defied time and are now preserved as very precious documents in the libraries of Iran, Europe and India.

(*d*) *The chief characteristics of Persian prose during the pre-Mongol period.*

As the Iranian nation became more and more influenced by the new

1 For detailed information reference may be made to *Legacy of Persia* p. 204 and *Literary History of Persia* by E. G. Browne Vol. I, pp. 260-70.

Arab culture and the Islamic civilization during the 5th and 6th centuries A.H./11th and 12th centuries A.D., Persian prose also borrowed a considerably large number of Arabic words, terms and usages. Even the composition of sentences in Persian was influenced by Arabic grammar, rhetoric and prosody. A large number of Arabic sayings, proverbs, verses and religious quotations were also intercalated into Persian prose texts.

Of this prose style, numerous works are extant. The most important of them are on History, Exegesis, Theology, Ethics, Literature and the Sciences.

Some of them may be mentioned here as the most representative specimens of the prose styles of these centuries:

1. Works on *History* and *Exegesis* (تاریخ و تفسیر طبری) by aṭ-Ṭabarí (d. A.H. 310/A.D. 923).
2. *Dánishnáma-i-'Alá'í* (دانشنامه علائی) on Philosophy by Avicenna (d. A.H. 427/A.D. 1037).
3. *At-Tafhím li Awá'ili Ṣaná'ati't-Tanjím* (التفهیم لاوائل صناعة التنجیم) on Astronomy by al-Bírúní (d. A.H. 440/A.D. 973).
4. *Qábús-Náma* (قابوسنامه) on Ethics by Kai-Ká'ús b. Iskandar (d. A.H. 475/A.D. 1082).
5. The *Book of Travels* and other works (سفرنامه و تألیفات دیگر ناصر خسرو) of Náṣir-i-Khusraw (d. A.H. 481/A.D. 1088).
6. *Chahár Maqála* (چهار مقاله) of Nizámí 'Arúẓí Samarqandí (d. A.H. 552/A.D. 1157).
7. *Jawámi'u'l-Ḥikáyát* (جوامع الحکایات) by 'Awfí (d. A.H. 630/A.D. 1232).
8. The *Exegesis of the Qur'án* (تفسیر) attributed to Khwája 'Abdu'lláh Anṣárí (d. A.H. 520/A.D. 1126).
9. The Translation of the *Kalíla va Dimna* (کلیله و دمنه) by 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd (d. A.H. 539/A.D. 1144).
10. *Zakhíra-i-Khwárazmsháhí* (ذخیرهٔ خوارزمشاهی) on Medicine by Zamnu'd-Dín Abu Ibráhím Ismá'íl b. Ḥasan of Gurgán (A.H. 531/A.D. 1136).

Lastly, the greatest masterpiece of Persian prose, appeared in the middle of the 7th century A.H., (13th century A.D.). This invaluable book is the Gulistán (گلستان) of Sa'adí, (A.H. 656/A.D. 1258) on ethics.

The above are only some of the great works produced during this period and they are mentioned merely to show the gradual evolution of modern Persian prose since the age of the Pahlaví language.

(c) *Development and perfection of prose during the period.*

It may, however, be remembered that Persian had developed into a full-fledged language in the 4th century A.H./10th century A.D. It had reached that high degree of perfection that later development could not add more than a few minor and superficial changes to its form only, while the essence and substance of the language remained as it had been.

Persian in the 4th century A.H./10th century A.D. may be compared with the 15th century English. As the writers of the Elizabethan era (Bacon, Spencer and Shakespeare) gave stability and permanence to the English language, the Persian writers of the 4th century A.H., and the later historians like the author of the *History of Sístán* (تاریخ سیستان) and the translators of Ṭabarí's works as well as such poets as Rúdakí (رودکی) and Firdawsí (فردوسی) contributed to the standardization of Persian. The foundation laid by them has proved so firm and solid that it has not shaken even after the lapse of a thousand years.

The most ancient of the books of the period, whose manuscripts are now in hand, are some translations from Arabic into Persian. One of them is the aforesaid *Ta'ríkh-i-Ṭabarí* (تاریخ طبری). Another is the *Tafsír-i-Ṭabarí*. Both of these works were originally written in Arabic by Muḥammad b. Jarír of Ṭabaristán, Mázandarán (d. A.H. 310/ A.D. 923). Manuscript copies of the translations of these two valuable works are found more or less in all the libraries of Iran, India and Europe. Some portions of them have also been printed.[1] The originals were written in Baghdad and 40 years later al-Bal'amí, one of the scholarly *viziers* at the court of Bukhárá ordered their translation into Persian.

Another work on Pharmacology namely, *Kitábu'l-abniya 'an ḥaqá'iqi'l-adwiya* (كتاب الابنيه عن حقايق الادويه) seems to have been written in the 10th-11th century A.D. Its unique manuscript copy,

1 *A catalogue of Persian MSS* in the British Museum and C. A. Storey, *Persian Literature.*

now extant, was done by the well-known poet Asadí of Ṭus (اسدی طوسی) in A.H. 447/A.D. 1056.

A fourth work, which may be mentioned here, is the *Hudúdu'l-'Alam* (حدود العالم) on geography (written in A.H. 372). It has recently been edited and translated into English by Vladimir Minorsky, a great scholar and orientalist of our time.

(*f*) *Two specimens from the beginning and the end of the period respectively.*

As a specimen of the prose of this period, it would suffice to quote a fragment from the preface of the *Sháhnáma* by Abú Manṣúr (مقدمهٔ شاهنامهٔ ابو منصوری) writted in A.H. 346. The preface, as we have already said, seems to have originally belonged to the ancient book, *khudháy-náma* (خدای نامه) which formed the chief source of the *Sháhnáma* of Firdawsí and is now extinct. It will be observed that it contains chaste Persian, and Arabic words do not occur more than one per cent. The Preface is the oldest document of modern Persian prose and is representative of the simplicity and purity of the style of prose in the 4th century A.H./10th century A.D.

The fragment selected by me gives an account of how the *Kalíla va Dimna* was taken to Iran from India. In a former lecture I quoted two passages on the same theme from the *Sháhnáma* (4th century A.H.) and the *Kalíla va Dimna-i-Bahrámsháhi* (A.D. 1144). You may compare them and discover the difference in style as well as realize the extent of development achieved during the different periods.

"... و مامون پسر هارون الرشید منش پاذشاهان و همت مهتران داشت
یکروز با فرزانگان نشسته بود گفت مردم بایذ که تا اندرین جهان باشند و توانائی
دارند بکوشند تا ازو یاذگاری بوذ تا پس از مرگ او نامش زنده بوذ .عبدالله پسر مقفع
که دبیر او بوذ گفتش که از کسری انوشیروان چیزی مانده است که از هیچ پاذشاه
نمانده است . مامون گفت چه ماند؟ گفت نامه از هندوستان بیاورد آنکه برزویه
طبیب از هندوی بپهلوی گردانیذه بوذ تا نام او زنده شذ میان جهانیان، و پانصد
خروار درم هزینه کرد . مامون آن نامه بخواست و آن نامه بدیذ، فرموذ دبیر خویش
را تا از زبان پهلوی بزبان تازی گردانیذ . پس امیر سعید نصر بن احمد این سخن
بشنیذ خوش آمذش، دستور خویش را خواجه بلعمی بر آن داشت تا از زبان
تازی بزبان پارسی گردانیذ، تا این نامه بدست مردمان افتاذ و هر کسی دست
بذو اندر زدند. و روذکی را فرموذ تا بنظم آورد، و کلیله ودمنه اندر زبان خرد و بزرگ

افتاد و نام او بدین زنده گشت و این نامه ازو یادگاری بماند پس چینیان تصاویر اندر افزودند تا هر کسی را خوش آید دیدن و خواندن آن" [1]

For the specimen of Persian prose in the 7th century A.H./13th century A.D., *i.e.*, a story from the *Gulistán* of Sa'adí written after about three centuries of the date of the above quotation, is quoted below. The changes in the language are easily noticeable.

"دو امیر زاده در مصر بودند، یکی علم آموخت و آندگر مال اندوخت، عاقبة الامر آن یکی علامه عصر شد وین دگر عزیز مصر گشت، پس این توانگر بچشم حقارت در فقیه نظر کردی و گفتی من بسلطنت برسیدم و تو همچنان در مسکنت مانده. گفت ای برادر شکر نعمت باری عز اسمه همچنان بر من افزونتراست که میراث پیغمبران یافتم، یعنی علم، و ترا میراث فرعون و هامان رسید، یعنی مالک مصر" [2]

II. *Persian prose during the 2nd part of the Islamic era.*

Post-Mongol Invasion prose: Period of stagnation and decline.

(*a*) *Scope of the period.*

As I have already said, this period began with the Mongol invasion of Iran (A.D. 1220) and ended with the dawn of the contemporary era *i.e.*, the end of the Irano-Russian wars in A.D. 1828.

(*b*) *Political conditions and their effect on the literature of the period.*

During this period, the Islamic culture declined everywhere. A new element of Mongol, Tartar and Turkish races appeared on the stage and entered into the countries situated in central and western Asia. Their sway extended upto Eastern India. Most of the ruling dynasties in these regions during the period, were of Turkish or Mongol origin, like the Ottoman Turks in Asia Minor, the Timurid Chaghatais and the Turkomans in Iran and the house of Bábur in India.

The Mongol and the Tartar rulers and chieftains were greatly desirous that their names should be preserved in history. They were keen to leave behind them splendid accounts of their conquests and military exploits. Thus with a view to surpassing his rivals in this respect every Mongol ruler devoted himself to the compilation of the

1 *Hazára-i-Firdawsí,* Teheran 1332, pp. 135-6.

2 *Kitáb-i-Gulistán,* ed. Mírzá 'Abdu'l-'Azím Gurgání, Teheran, A.H. 1310 (solar), p. 96.

history of his dynasty and encouraged historians to do so. Also like the ancient monarchs of Iran, they were fond of eulogies and panegyrics. Furthermore, they had great faith in the occult sciences, such as astrology and medicine. Consequently, they collected a large number of historians, poets, physicians and astrologers in their courts. A great many books, both in prose and poetry, on the aforesaid subjects were, therefore, produced during the period. These books were written in a style which was marked for its pomp and rhymes, as well as for exaggeration and verbosity.

(c) *New developments in prose.*

Persian prose now began to decline. The magnificent groundwork of the first period (10th—13th century A.D.) was, however, not yet lost. Nevertheless, the prose styles had undergone a conspicuous change and transformation in the course of these centuries.

In the history of our literature, particularly that of prose, the period is generally known as one of stagnation and decline. During it, Persian prose had lost its vigour, freshness and vivacity. The beauties and the charming qualities of the styles prevalent in earlier days were no more there. Quantity gave place to quality. While production increased in number, there are few masterpieces of this period which really deserve to be called monumental works.

Though poetry did not much deteriorate during the period, prose writers in their productions paid more attention to the form than to the meaning. Most of them devoted themselves to stylish modes and to pedantry. They fettered themselves with verbosity even while expressing themselves on useful and serious subjects. The result was that an obscure and high-sounding style took the place of brevity, simplicity and clarity of the earlier writings. A lesser percentage of words of Persian origin are noticed in the texts of this period. On the other hand, Arabic words, especially figures of speech and rhymed prose are the predominant features of all the writings of this era.

One of the characteristics of this period, which particularly interests us, is the production in India of a large number of Persian books, both in prose and poetry. Some of these were written by Iranians who had migrated from Iran and had settled in India, while some others were produced by Indian writers themselves who wrote in Persian. Since political and religious systems of the Governments in both the countries during 9th—12th century A.H., were to some extent similar to each other, the literary works of the period in the two countries bear a good deal of resemblance; *i.e.*, the ways observed by the Timurids and the Safavids in Iran were adopted by the Mughal rulers of northern India

and some dynasties in the Deccan in laying the foundation of literature at their courts. Consequently, the subjects and the matter employed in Isfahan and Herat were closely followed in Delhi and Golcunda. As such, the general features of the prose in Iran and India during this period, are similar. Writers who contributed to the prose literature for six centuries (8th—13th century A.H.) are mainly of two categories. First, who devoted themselves to the praise of sultans, amirs and viziers, most of whom were Turanids. In so doing, these writers competed with each other in trying to excel in the use of ornate composition and assonance.

The other category was of such writers as wrote on religious, theological and mystic subjects.

Although owing to the downfall of the Baghdad Caliphate, the Arabic language had lost its domination over Iran and was on the decline in general, it continued to be the medium of instruction both in the sciences and the letters, as before. Specially religious and philosophical subjects were treated in Arabic.

(*d*) *Subjects covered by the prose literature of the period.*

The subjects of study during the period, as known to us, are mainly:

1. *History*. During the Mongol and the Tartar periods, this branch of prose-writing achieved a special prominence. Detailed works on universal history or that of a particular dynasty are numerous. It must be admitted that in this particular branch of Knowledge, this period is superior to the earlier ones, though the superiority is more of number and extent than of quality and merit.

2. *Religious books*. These included exegesis, theology, jurisprudence and the biographies of the prophet of Islam, the Imams and the prominent religious figures. It may be noted that Shí'a-ism got the better of Sunní-ism during this period and after a conflict of nine centuries a Shí'a kingdom was established in Iran. Shí'a-ism thus became the state religion of the country. The Ṣafavid government was the first Shí'a government of Iran and ever since then the doctrine of the *"Twelve Imáms"* has been chiefly followed by the people of the country. The influence of this religious development is clearly perceptible in the literature of this era. Many prose works on Shí'a theology, jurisprudence as well as eulogies and panegyrics to the Imáms were produced. Historians have also written much in praise of their virtues and have mourned the martyrdom of the house of the Prophet in their works.

3. *Philosophical, mystic and ethical works.* Particularly those

on Ṣúfí-ism which enjoyed great popularity during the period, deserve a special mention. The philosophical and mystical works in the pre-Mongol era were mostly written in Arabic. Although during this period the great works on these subjects continued to be written in the same language by Iranian and other writers, nevertheless, we find that a large number of books on these subjects were written by great mystics in Persian also for the benefit of the rulers, amírs and viziers who did not know Arabic. The treatises of Jámí such as *Nafaḥátu'l-Uns* (نفحات الانس) and *Ashi'atu'l-Lama'át* (اشعة اللمعات) are very good examples. These books are remarkable not only for their simplicity and easy style, but also for the great warmth of feeling contained in them.

4. *Miscellaneous books* were written on specific sciences like medicine, astronomy, pharmacology, chemistry, and occult sciences like astrology, magic, alchemy etc. Encyclopædias are also a peculiarity of this age.

(*e*) *A select bibliography of the prose works of this period.*

I shall mention some of the important works on the above subjects, as examples representing the particular prose style of the period.

A. History:

1. *Jámi'ut-Tawáríkh* (جامع التواریخ) written in A.H. 718/A.D. 1318 by Rashídu'd-Dín Faẓlu'lláh Hamadání.
2. *Ta'ríkh-i-Vaṣṣáf* (تاریخ وصاف) written in A.H. 712/A.D. 1312 by 'Abdu'lláh Shírází.
3. *Ta'ríkh-i-Jahán-gusháy* (تاریخ جهانگشای) completed in A.H. 658/A.D. 1260 by 'Aṭá Malik-i-Juwayní.
4. *Ẓafar-náma-i-Tímúrí* (ظفرنامهٔ تیموری) written in A.H. 416/A.D. 1025 by Sharafu'd-Dín Yazdí.
5. *Rawẓatu's-Safá* (روضة الصفا) written by Muḥammad b. Kháwand Sháh b. Maḥmúd commonly known as Mírkhwánd (d. A.H. 903/A.D. 1497-98).
6. *Ḥabíbu's-Siyar* (حبیب السیر) written by Ghiyáṣu'd-Dín b. Humámu'd-Dín better known as Khwánd Amír (d. A.H. 941/A.D. 1535).
7. *Ta'ríkh-i-'Álam-árá-yi- 'Abbásí* (تاریخ عالم آرای عباسی) completed in A.H. 1038/A.D. 1628-29 by Iskandar Beg Munshí.

B. Religious Books:

1. *Shawáhidu'n-Nubúwwa* (شواهد النبوة) composed in A.H. 885/A.D. 1480 by Jámí .
2. *Gauhar-i-Murád* (گوهر مراد) by 'Abdu'r-Razzáq-i-Lahíjí (d. A.H. 1051/A.D. 1641).
3. *Jámi'-i-'Abbási* (جامع عباسی) on Jurisprudence by Shaykh Muḥmmad Bahá'ud-Dín al-'Ámilí better known as Shaykh-i-Baha'í (b. A.H. 953/A.D. 1546; d. A.H. 1031/A.D. 1622). It was lithographed at Lucknow in A.H. 1264 and in Iran in A.H. 1277.
4. *Haqqu'l-Yaqín and Hayátu'l-Qulúb* (حق اليقين و حيات القلوب) both by Mulláh Muḥammad Báqír Majlisí (b. A.H. 1038/A.D. 1628; d. A.H. 1111/A.D. 1699-1700).

C. Ethics, Essays etc:

1. *Akhláq-i-Náṣirí* (اخلاق ناصری)[1] by the famous astronomer and philosopher Khwája Naṣíru'd-Dín-i-Ṭúsí (b. in Ṭús, A.H. 597/A.D. 1200; d. in Baghdád, A.H. 673/A.D. 1274).
2. *Akhláq-i-Jaláli* (اخلاق جلالی) written between the years A.D. 1467 and 1477 by Jalálu'd-Dín Dawání (b. A.H. 830/A.D. 1426-27; d. A.H. 908/A.D. 1502-3).
3. *Anwár-i-Suhayli* (انوار سهیلی) completed by Mullá Ḥusayn-i-Káshifí (d. A.H. 910/A.D. 1504-05).

For the specimen of the prose style of this period, I shall quote from the *Anwár-i-Suhaylí*. This book is another rendering of the *Kalíla va Dimna* from Arabic into Persian. It was written in the 9th century A.H./15th century A.D. The theme of one of its passages, namely the story relating to the translation of the book from Sanskrit into Persian has often been mentioned by me. I quote from the *Anwár-i-Suhaylí* here for comparison with the earlier quotation on pages 35-36, as well as with passages quoted in my previous lecture. It will serve to indicate the salient features of the prose style of the period as well as the points in which it differs from the styles of the earlier periods. The peculiarity of

1 As a matter of fact, so far as the style of the book is concerned, it should have been classified with works of the earlier period, but since its author was contemporary with the Mongol rulers, it is mentioned here.

this book, so far as students in India are concerned, is that during the last two centuries or so, it has been used as one of the best text-books for Persian studies in this country.

" و از جمله رسائل که مبانی تصنیفش مشتمل بود بر میامن نصیحت و از مجموع کتب که قواعد تالیفش مبنی باشد بر مسائل حکمت کتاب کلیله و دمنہ است که حکمای هند آنرا بر طرزی خاص ساخته‌اند و براهمه حکمت شعار اوضاع جامعیت آنرا بر نمطی مخصوص پرداخته پند و حکمت ولهو وهزل بهم امتزاج داده‌اند و صورت سخن را جهت میل اکثر طباع بدان بنا برافسانه نهاده از زبان وحوش و بهائم و طیور اصناف حکایات و روایات تقریر کرده و در ضمن آن انواع فوائد حکمت و میامن موعظت اندراج نموده تا دانا برای استفاده مطالعه نماید و نادان برای تنزه و افسانه بخواند و درس آن برمتعلم آسان باشد و فی نفس‌الامر آن کتاب حکمت انتساب حدیقه‌ایست اشجار اسرارش بازهار و فیها ما تشتهیه الانفس و تلذ الاعین منور و اطراف گلزارش بنفحات ما لا عین رائت و لا اذن سمعت مطیب و معطر:

مثنوی

هر نکته ازو شگفته باغی — افروخته تر ز شبچراغی
لفظش چو طراوت جوانی — معنیش چو آب زندگانی

و افاضت آن منبع حقائق و معانی بمرتبه ایست که از مبداء ظهور تا این زمان بهر زبان مستفیدان مجلس ارادت و مستبعدان محفل سعادت را فائده رسانیده و کسوت این ابیات را زائق برbالای والای این کتاب خلعتیست زیبنده و لائق........"[1]

D. Books written in India:

1. *Muntakhbu't-Tawárikh* (منتخب التواریخ) by 'Abdu'l-Qádir b. Mulúksháh Badá'úní (b. at Badá'ún *circa* A.H. 948/A.D. 1541; d. A.H. 1004-6/A.D. 1596-98).
2. *Ta'ríkh-i-Alfí* (تاریخ الفی) commenced by order of Akbar in A.H. 993/A.D. 1585 by Mullá Aḥmad Tatawí and after his assassination in Ṣafar 15, 996/January 15, 1588, continued by Áṣaf Khán.
3. *Akbarnáma* (اکبر نامه) by Abu'l-Faẓl 'Allámí bin Mubárak born at Agra in A.H. 958/A.D. 1551; assassinated in A.H. 1011/A.D. 1602.

1. *Anwár-i-Suhaylí*, Kanpur Edition, 1929, pp. 3-4.

4. *A'in-i-Akbarí* (آئین اکبری) by the aforementioned author composed in A.H. 1025/A.D. 1616.
5. *Mahábhárat* (مہابھارت) with a preface by the above mentioned author.
6. *Ma'áṣir-i-Raḥímí* (ماثر رحیمی) by 'Abdu'l-Báqí b. Bábáy-i-Kurd-i-Nahávandí and dedicated to 'Abdu'r-Raḥím Khánkhánán.
7. *Gulshan-i-Ibráhímí* (گلشن ابراهیمی) commonly known as the *Ta'ríkh-i-Firishta* (تاریخ فرشته) by Muḥammad Qásim Hindúsháh of Astarábád and dedicated to his patron Naṣírúd-Dín Ibráhim 'Adilsháh of Bíjápúr.
8. *Sih Naṣr-i-Zuhúrí* (سه نثر ظهوری) by the stylist Muḥammad Núru'd-Dín of Turshíz (d. *Circa* A.H. 1027/A.D. 1618).
9. *Jawáhiru'l-'Ulúm* (جواهر العلوم) by Mawláná Muḥammad Fazl (d. A.H. 946/A.D. 1539-40).

Below is a specimen of a prose piece written in simple Persian extant in India. The extract dealing with our self-same theme of the book of *Kalíla va Dimna*, has been taken from Abu'l-Fazl 'Allámí's work, entitled "*'Iyár-i-Dánish*", (عیار دانش) whose compilation was taken up by the author at the order of Akbar the Great, towards the end of the sixteenth century A.D. and whose felicity of expression is noteworthy.

........بر دانش پذیران نکته‌رس و روشن ضمیران صبح نفس پوشیده نماند
که در زمان پیشین حکیم بیدپای برهمن بفرمودهٔ رای دابشلیم هندی که فرمانروائی
بعضی از ولایت هندوستان داشت کتاب کلیله و دمنه که بزبان هندی کرتك
و دمنك گویند تصنیف کرده بود و چون نظر دوربین رای دابشلیم دریافته بود که
دلها را همه وقت بشنیدن سخنان حکمت میل نمیباشد و طبیعتها به افسانه
شنیدن توجه تمام دارد از دانای مذکور خواسته بود که پند دانایان پیشین که به
ترازوی دانش سنجیده باشد لباس افسانه پوشانیده از زبان بی زبانان ادا نماید
تا از غرض پاك شده در همه اوقات چه در زمان خوشحالی و چه در هنگام سرد
دلی از خواندن این کتاب سیری بهم نرسد و ملالی نشود...... و حکایت میکنند
که یکی از برهمنان هندوستان را پرسیدند که در یونان زمین مشهورست که بجانب
هندوستان کوهها باشد که در آنجا داروها روید که مرده بدان زنده شود این سخن
راست است؟ و روش بدست آوردن چونست؟ برهمن گفت این سخن راست

است لیکن رمز دانایان پیشین ماست چه از کوهها دانایان خواسته اند، و از دواها سخنان حکمت، و از مرده نادانان که بوسیله دانشها بزندگانی جاوید میرسند و این سخنان را دانایان هند فراهم آورده و کتابی ساخته اند که نام او کلیله و دمنه است. و در خزاین بادشاهان میباشد از آنجا بدست توان آورد اما بسعی بسیار، تا آنکه نوشیروان را شوقی تمام بدیدن این کتاب شریف پدید آمد برزویه طبیب را که بدانش و تدبیر یگانه روزگار بود بهندوستان فرستاد و حکیم مذکور بهند آمد و مدتی مدید در بهم رسانیدن این کتاب انواع حیله ها و وسیله‌ها بر انگیخته این کتاب را از زبان هندی به پهلوی در آورده تحفه مجلس عالی نوشیروان ساخت و بوسیله این خدمت شرف تحسین و احسان یافته کامیاب شد. و نوشیروان از مطالعه آن خوشدل و شگفته خاطر شده مدار مهمات ملکی و مالی را بر ضابطهای این کتاب نهاد.[1]

Persian Dictionaries written in India:

One of the chief characteristics of the Persian prose literature in India is the growth and development of lexicography in this country. During the Moghul rule in Northern India and under the rulers of the Deccan, Indian scholars devoted themselves to the compilation of Persian dictionaries. In a short time, the number of dictionaries compiled in India exceeded those produced earlier in Irán. Their superiority has been such that even today students and scholars refer to them for the solution of their difficulties.

Among the scores of Persian dictionaries written in India, I mention hereunder some of the most famous, as follows:

1. *Farhang-i-Jahángírí* (فرهنگ جهانگیری) completed in A.H. 1017/A.D. 1608-9 by Jamálu'd-Dín Ḥusayn Injú b. Fakhru'd-Dín Ḥasan Shírází (d. *Circa* A.H. 1030/A.D. 1621 and dedicated to Jahángír.
2. *Farhang-i-Rashídí* (فرهنگ رشیدی) completed in A.H. 1064/A.D. 1654 by 'Abdu'r-Rashíd b. 'Abdu'l-Ghafúr al-Ḥusaní.
3. *Burhán-i-Qáṭi'* (برهان قاطع) completed in A.H. 1062/A.D. 1652 by Muḥammad Husayn *Burhán* b. Khalaf at-Tabrízí.
4. *Bahár-i-'Ajam* (بهار عجم) by Ráí Ṭekchand poetically surnamed *Bahár*, a Khatrí of Delhi.

1. Abu'l-Faẓl 'Allámí, *'Iyár-i-Dánish*, (Nawal Kishor Edition) Kanpur 1894, pp. 2-3.

5. *Farhang-i-Anandráj* (فرهنگ آنندراج) by Muḥammad Bádsháh, the Mír-munshí (Chief Secretary) to Mahárájah Anandráj of Vizianagram.

6. *Farhang-i-Niẓám* (فرهنگ نظام) by Sayyid Muḥammad 'Alí Dá'íyu'l-Islám.

III. *Persian prose during the 3rd part of the Islámic era.*
Contemporary prose.

(*a*) *The dawn of the era.*

The prose literature of this period, beginning with the 19th century A.D./13th century A.H., is a natural outcome of the great political upheavals of the modern era.

(*b*) *Its Characteristics.*

Persian prose at this stage, once again, got rid of the artificial and obscure style and also became free from the verbose and rhymed composition. It also acquired great popularity owing to the growing needs of the period. The art of printing was introduced in Iran during this period. Numerous works of ancient masters as well as the thoughts of the contemporary scholars were printed. Journalism came into practice and influenced the contemporary prose style. Hundreds of dailies as well as weekly and monthly journals started publication in Teheran and other cities of Irân. Also schools, colleges and universities were founded in all oriental countries, including Iran. Consequently the doors of knowledge and learning were at once thrown open to all and compulsory primary education was promulgated.

During this period, Irân also witnessed great social and political changes. The old medieval institutions were replaced by a new order and the absolutism of the medieval age surrendered before a national democratic government.

(*c*) *Influence of Western Cultuure.*

Several outstanding works of European scholars, scientists and philosophers, particularly those of the French writers, have been translated. During this period. Persian literature has been profoundly influenced by the European culture and literatures.

Lastly, it is during this period that works on the art of criticism and methodical research were produced by Persian writers. Scholars devoted themselves to the study of arts, sciences and literature on

modern lines. Two scholars may be named for having guided the new generation of Persian scholars in modern methods of scholarly research. One of them was an Iranian scholar, the late Mírzá Muḥammad Qazwíní (d. A.D. 1949) and the other was the late Professor E. G. Browne of Cambridge (d. A.D. 1926).

(*d*) *The chief characteristics of contemporary prose.*

A specimen of the contemporary prose will suffice here to show the simplicity and flow of the style now prevalent in Iran. It is a technical survey of our old theme, namely, the translation of the *Kalíla va Dimna* from Sanskrit into Persian. The extract belongs to the scholarly introduction to the *Kalíla va Dimna* edited on modern lines by Mírzá 'Abdu'l-'Aẓím Qaríb, a contemporary scholar and professor of the University of Teheran.

اصل کلیله ودمنه بزبان هندی (سانسکریت) بوده و ایرانیان آنرا بفارسی نقل نموده و از خود بابهائی چند بر آن افزوده‌اند چنانکه درمقدمه کلیله ابن مقفع مسطوراست : در زمان انوشیروان عادل طبیب ایرانی موسوم به برزویه بامر انوشیروان بهندوستان رفته آن کتاب و بعضی کتب دیگر را بایران آورد و بزبان پهلوی که زبان ادبی ایران در آنزمان بود ترجمه کرد . اصل کتاب مزبور و ترجمهٔ پهلوی آن بکلی از بین رفته ولی ترجمه که ابن المقفع از پهلوی به عربی کرده خوشبختانه باقی است . تا این اواخر چنین تصور میشد که این ترجمه قدیمترین منشاء کتاب است ولی در سال هزار و دویست و هشتاد و هفت هجری ترجمه سریانی از کلیله پیدا شد که یکنفر روحانی عیسوی مذهب ایرانی (پرود یوت بود) بسال پانصد و هفتاد میلادی یعنی نه سال قبل از وفات انوشیروان از همان نسخه پهلوی بسریانی ترجمه کرده است . قسمتی از کلیله و دمنه اصلی هنوز در هندوستان بزبان سانسکریت موجود و شامل پنج کتاب است که آنرا بزبان هندی (پنچاتنترا) مینامند این کتاب یکی از مهمترین منابع کلیله و دمنه را تشکیل میدهد . از ترجمه‌های مهمی که از روی ترجمه عربی انتشار یافته یکی ترجمه بزبان عبری و ترجمه بزبان اسپانیولی و دیگر بزبان ایطالیائی است . اسم اصلی کلیله و دمنه بزبان هندی (کرتکاو دمنکا) بوده است حرف (ر) در زبان پهلوی تبدیل بلام شده و پس از نقل بعربی حرف کاف تبدیل به هاء غیرملفوظ گردیده و از آن کلیله و دمنه بوجود آمده است .[1]

1 *Kalílá va Dimná,* Qaríb edition, Teheran, p. 5; Preface.

You will notice in the above passage that the writer has not sacrificed the meaning for the sake of a bombastic style. He has used simple expressions, free from all unnecessary ornamentation. He has placed before the reader historical facts, methodically extracted from reliable sources.

A comparison of the five passages, namely,

(a) Extract from the *Sháhnáma* of Firdawsí ... (Lecture 2)

(b) Extract from the preface to the *Kalíla va Dimna*-i-Bahrámsháhí ... ... (Lecture 2)

(c) Extract from the *Shánáma* of Abú Manṣúr ... (Lecture 3)

(d) *Anwár-i-Suhailí* ... ... (Lecture 4)

(e) *'Iyár-i-Dánish* ... ... (Lecture 4)

(f) Extract from the preface to the *Kalíla va Dimna* by Prof. Qaríb ... ... (Lecture 4)

will give the student some idea of the development of the Persian prose during the last thousand years or so.

Summary.

In short, the following facts regarding the history of the growth of the Persian prose may be noted:

1. Persian prose appeared in a full-fledged form during the 4th century A.H./10th century A.D.

2. This new prose was an intermixture of Pahlaví and Arabic.

3. For three and a half centuries (4th, 5th, 6th and the first half of the 7th century A.H.) Persian prose was at its best.

4. During the next five and a half centuries (the latter half of the 7th century and 8th—12th century A.H.) it acquired a state of stagnation and, later, it declined. The prose works during this period are more extensive, so far as the quantity is concerned, than the earlier periods, but the style had certainly deteriorated in respect of quality and merit.

5. From the 13th century A.H./18-19th century A.D. a new life and form has been given to the Persian prose. The general outline and plan of the prose works of this century, as the needs of the time demanded, are closely in line with those of the occidental languages.

6. It is yet to predict the progress which Persian prose may make hereafter. It depends on the ability and capacity of the present and future writers not only to vindicate the ancient glories but also to add to them and make the Persian literature rank among the foremost literatures of the world.



LECTURE V

POETRY I (PRE-ISLAMIC)

Preface: Value of Persian poetry.

1. Poetry in ancient Iran.
2. Poetry during the age of the Pahlaví language.
   - (a) Fahlaviyyát (double-distichs).
   - (b) Two romantic maṣnavís.
     - (i) *Vis-u-Rámín* by Fakhr Gurgání.
     - (ii) *Khusraw-u-Shírín* by Nizámí.
   - (c) Fragments of Pahlaví poetry.
   - (d) The tradition of Bahrám Gúr: His Poetry. The story of the Indian gypsies.
3. Conclusion.
4. A Select Bibliography.

Preface: Value of Persian Poetry.

Love for art and a keen taste for beauty are known to be the national traits of the Persian-speaking people. So also their language possesses an elegance, grace of expression and tenderness as well as depth of meaning. This language particularly excels in beautiful metonymy, exquisite metaphors and delicate similes. Peoples and languages, having these qualities, like the Greeks and the Latin in the West, and Hebrew, Arabic and Sanskrit in the East, become naturally possessed of an immortal literature and an outstanding poetry.

Among the languages of the world, Persian has the pecularity of having had poetry as the predominant branch of literature and of verses becoming superior to the prose. Even some of the prose works, like the *Gulistán* of Sa'dí, are so well-ornamented with beautiful expressions, delicacy of meaning and with rhymes and assonance that though the people of Iran call them prose works, it is very difficult for a foreigner to differentiate between these works and the pure poetry.

Their country having always been the cradle of spiritual thoughts and the stronghold of divine movements, Iranians have ever preferred poetry for the expression of their sentiments and thoughts. As such, hymns and songs have not only existed in the national language of the

country from the most ancient times, but have also found the utmost encouragement for an unchecked development throughout the course of the history. Consequently, Persian poetry has acquired a prominent place and an excellent reputation among the literatures of the world. As a matter of fact, all the thinkers and savants of Iran have identified the very word 'سخن' "parole" with poetry. They have chosen it for conveying all their intuitive and perceptive experiences. Besides the general subjects like history, legend etc., even the domain of the exact sciences, medicine, astronomy and so on, was not neglected by our poet-scholars. The following verse contains a true portrait of all Iranian authors:

در سخن پنهان شدم مانند بو در برگ گل
هر که میخواهد مرا گو در سخن جوید مرا

I am concealed in verses like the fragrance in the rose-petal;
Whosoever wants to find me, ask him to seek me in poetry.

The *Sháhnáma* of Firdawsí, which contains the legends of ancient Iran, as well as the exact history of the later periods, is no more than an epic poem and it has demonstrated that poetry is superior to prose. Firdawsí argues that while the prose works are lost with the passage of time, poetry remains immortal as it contributes to the pleasures of the mind and the soul. He says:

به پیوست گویا پراکنده را بسفت اینچنین در آگنده را
حدیث پراکنده بپراکند چو پیوسته شد مغز جان آگند

1. *Poetry in Ancient Iran.*

Ever since the age of the Old Persian and the Avestan languages (about B.C. 700), the use of rhythmic composition for the expression of religious thoughts was common in Iran. The finest specimens of the verses of that period, though small in number, are contained in the *Avesta*. Religious rites from time immemorial were used to be performed to the accompaniment of music. It is, therefore, appropriate that these hymns be treated as the ancient poetry. We discussed the *Avesta* at length in our earlier lectures. Let it suffice here to say that certain parts of this book, like the "*Yashts*", are composed in the poetical form and contain hymns in the glorification of the "Amshásepandán". As I have said earlier, the present *Avesta* is but a small portion of the great scripture which existed during the Sásánian period. It was usually written in letters of gold on hides and preserved in the fire-temples and the College of Istakhr-i-Pápakán (استخر پاپکان), the Sasanian capital, and at other great centres of religious and mundane education.

The *Gáthás,* another part of the *Avesta,* are also in a type of "Sarvád", verse. The *Gáthás,* meaning the hymns, are a kind of free octosyllabic verse, and are attributed to Zarathushtra himself. So, he may be considered as the first poet of Iran.

One of the poets of the last century has summarized the Zoroastrian teachings in a reference to the *Gáthás* and the *Yashts*. He says:

دین زرتشت که روشن ز فروغش در و دشت
پایه اش بر همت و هوخت بود با هورشت
چم ایفان منشن باشد و گوشن و کنشن
وین سخن را همه جا گفت چه در گات و چه یشت
پاکی فکرت و قول و عملت جان ترا
پاك سازد ز بدی، ورنه پلیدی و پلشت [1]

The Zoroastrian doctrines, whose (heavenly) light keeps the world bright, are based on "Hamat, Houkht and Hourasht". The meaning of these is (chastity of) thought, word and action. These teachings are mentioned both in the *Gáthás* and the *Yashts*. Chastity of thought, word and action makes thee chaste and free from vice, otherwise, thou art vicious and impure.

To give you some of the poetic thoughts contained in the *Avesta,* I quote a fragment from the 44th Yasná, a dialogue between the prophet and God.

از تو میپرسم ای اهورا براستی مرا از آن آگاه فرما
کیست آنکسیکه روز نخست از آفرینش خویش پدر راستی گردید ؟
کیست آنکه بخورشید و ستاره راه سیر بنمود ؟
کیست آنکسیکه ماه ازو گهی پرست و گهی تهی ؟
ای مزدا این و بسا چیزهای دیگررا میخواهم (بدانم)-
از تو میپرسم ای اهورا براستی مرا ازآن آگاهی ده ؟
کیست نگهدار این زمین در پائین ؟
و سپهر دربالا که بسوی نشیب فرود نیاید ؟
کیست آفریننده آب و گیاه ؟
کیست که بباد و ابر تند روی آموخت ؟

1. *Díwán of Ṣádiq Faráhání,* Teheran.

کیست ای مزدا آفرینندہ منش پاك ؟
از تو میپرسم ای اهورا براستی مرا از آن آگاہ فرما
کیست آفرینندہ روشنائی سود بخش و تاریکی ؟
کیست آفرینندہ خواب خوشی بخش و بیداری ؟
کیست آفرینندہ با مداد و نیمروز ؟
و شب که مردم را برای بجا آوردن نماز همی خواند ؟[1]

Translation

"I ask thee O Ahuramazda! Verily guide me to the Truth".
"Who became aware of the Truth from the very first day of his creation?"
"Who shew their orbits to the Sun and the stars?"
"With whose presence the Moon is sometimes full and sometimes empty?"
"O Mazda! these and many other things I want (to know)."
"I ask thee O Ahura! Verily guide me to the Truth."
"Who is the preserver of this earth, below?"
"And the sky, above, which does not come down towards declivity?"
"Who is the creator of the water and vegetation?"
"Who taught the wind and the cloud (the art of) fleet-footedness?"
"Who is, O Mazda! the creator of good nature?"
"I ask thee O Ahura! Verily guide me to the Truth."
"Who is the creator of the useful light and of darkness?"
"Who is the creator of the sweet sleep and of wakefulness?"
"Who is the creator of the morning and the midday?"
"And the night, calling men to offer their prayers?"

2. *Poetry during the Age of the Pahlaví Language.*

I explained previously that the Pahlaví language was current in Iran during the era beginning with the invasion of the Greeks (4th century B.C.) and ending with almost three centuries after the Arab occupation of that country. It attained perfection during the Sásánian period. Firdawsí has mentioned this language on several occasions in his *Sháhnáma*. Ḥáfiẓ has also referred to the odes of Pahlaví in one of his finest ghazals, quoted for you in the foregoing lecture.

1 Dr. Mohammed Moin, *Mazdyesna and its Influence on Persian Literature* Teheran, p. 308.

Ibn Muqaffa' describes Pahlaví as the court language of Iran. Poetry and musical compositions must, therefore, have existed in the language since there is no doubt that the courts of the kings and satraps were the cradles of these arts.

Truly speaking, poetry, par excellence, is distinguishable in the compositions produced during the Islamic period. The mature and skilful forms of poetry, embodying a deep melody and a high degree of clarity and explicitness, came into existence only from the 3rd and 4th centuries A.H. onwards.

(*a*) *Fahlaviyyát* (*Double-distichs*).

From the point of view of form, some of the patterns existing during the period were of purely Iranian origin and cannot be said to have been imitated from the Arabic verses of the Jáhiliyyah "العصر الجاهلی" (pre-Islamic era). One of these notable forms, which I should like to mention here, is the light, beautiful double-distich, called *"Du-baití"* (دو بیتی). The *Du-baití* is like a quatrain (رباعی) It contains four hemistichs, the first, the second and the fourth of which rhyme with one another. Its metre, however, differs from that of the quatrain and may be rendered as ⏑- - -/⏑- - -/⏑- - , which is equal to مفاعیلن مفاعیلن فعولن . In the terminology of prosody this metre is known as (بحر هزج مسدس محذوف). The *Du-baití* is still a popular song in Irán and Afghanistán, especially among the villagers and the tribesmen of the hills. This shows that such lyrics existed in the country before the advent of Islám. To these *"Du-baitis"* which are also called "Tarána" ترانه (folk song) in Persian, the Islamic critics gave the name of *"Fahlaviyyát"* (فهلویات). This, in its own turn, proves beyond doubt that their source is derived from the Pahlaví language. Furthermore, poems analogous to the *"Du-baitis"*, in form and metre, are neither found in the Arabic poetry of Jáhiliyyah nor in the Islamic compositions of that language. These folk-songs were originally free from the contamination of Arabic words. Later, however, literary critics seem to have meddled with them and their vocabulary has undergone a change.

The finest specimens of such verses, definitely current from before Islám, are those mostly attributed to Bábá Ṭáhir 'Uryán (A.H. 410/ A.D. 1079). These are in the "Lúrí" dialect *i.e.*, the dialect of the tribesmen of the western hills of Persia. A beautiful rendering of Bábá Ṭáhir's *Du-baitís* into English was done by Elizabeth Curtis Brenton.[1] A fine collection of some 700 Du-baitís, from different

1. *The Lament of Bábá Ṭáhir,* London, 1902.

districts, has been compiled by Kúhí Kirmání and recently published in Teheran.

Though some of these short, ardent and melodious popular songs betray a good deal of mystic thought, Islámic philosophy and the influence of the later Ṣúfís, there are many others which are much older than the domination of Islám and, hence, free from the impact of that religion and the Arabic language. These are remarkable for their purity, simplicity and ardour.

Specimen I.

خرم آنان که هر زامان ته وینن   سخن و اته کرن و اته نشینن
گرم پایی نه بی کآیم ته وینم   بشم آنون بوینم که ته وینن

Happy are they who live in the sight of thee,
Who hang upon thy words and dwell with thee,
Too frail to approach, I see thee afar,
And seek the sight of those that see thee ever.

Specimen II.

بهار آیو بهر باغی گلی بی   بهرشاخی هزاران بلبلی بی
بهر مرزی نیارم پا نهادن   مباد از مو بتر سوته دلی بی

'Tis Spring! in every garden roses bloom,
On every bough a thousand nightingales;
There is no mead where I can set my foot,
Pray there be none more Burnt-in-Heart than I.[1]

Specimen III.

بمو سوته دلون هون تا بنالیم   ز هجر آن گل رعنا بنالیم
بشیم با بلبل شیدا بگلشن   اگر بلبل نناله ما بنالیم

O Burnt-in-Heart, come ye and mourn with me,
Mourn we the flight of that most lovely Rose;
Hie we with the ecstatic Nightingale to the Rose-Garden,
And when she ceases mourning, we will mourn.[2]

(*b*) *Two Romantic Maṡnavís.*

Another poetic form, peculiar to the Iranian genius is the couplet-poem (Maṡnaví). Apparently, like the Du-baití is has no analogy in the old Arabic literature of Jáhiliyyah, except perhaps the "*Urjúzah*" (ارجوزه)

1. Edward Heron-Allen and Elizabeth Curtis Brenton, *The Lament of Bábá Ṭáhir,* London, 1902, pp. 38 and 75.
2. *Ibid.,* pp. 29 and 71.

which too is quite different from the Persian maṣnavís. In Persian poetry, however, extensive subjects like the legends, lengthy stories, lyrics, epics and didactic themes were composed in this form as early as the 4th century A.H. *i.e.*, in the era of the Iranian re-birth and independence.

The *Sháhnáma* of Firdawsí composed in the same century, is the best specimen of epic poetry. Next to it comes the *Garshásрnáma* of Asadí (گرشاسپ نامۀ اسدی) which relates the adventures of an Iranian hero in India. It gives very useful information about the Indo-Iranian relations before the spread of Islám in the two countries.[1]

It may also be said that this form was peculiar to the Sásánian Age. It, however, developed during the early centuries of the Islámic era. The memory of the ancient Pahlaví poetry was revived by two lengthy *Maṣnavís* composed in the 5th and the 6th centuries A.H., respectively. These poems are two love-stories which had their source in the Pahlaví lores. Their having been derived from Pahlaví sources is reflected from their present rendering.

(i) *Vís-u-Rámín.*

The romance of the two lovers known as Vís and Rámín (ویس و رامین) : This old Pahlaví narrative was rendered into modern Persian verse in A.H. 446 by Fakhru'd-Dín As'ad of Gurgán[2] (فخر الدین اسعد گرگانی) a poet of the early Seljúq period. The *Maṣnaví* is famous for its sweet verses, beautiful language and charming similes. All the heroes of this tale are Iranians and the poet has laid the stage of their activities too in the same country.

It is interesting to note that there are three forms of a word, namely, "*sarvá, sarvád, surúd* سروا سرواد و سرود " all meaning poetry. These are derived from Pahlaví. One of them is still used in the same sense in some remote parts of southern Irán. Fakhru'd-Dín Gurgání also has used "sarvá سروا in the following verse:

علو پایه جاهش از آن بلند تر است   که فکر همچو منی اندرو کند سروا

> The eminence of his dignity is far superior to (what an imagination like mine can comprehend) to compose poetry about it.

It is important to point out that the metre used in the *Vís-u-Rámín* is exactly the same as that of the "Du-baitís" (*i.e.*, بحر هزج مسدس محذوف)

1 *Garshásрnáma*, ed. by Habíb-i-Yaghmá'í, Teheran, A.H. 1317, (Solar).

2 Gurgán (*Arabicised* "Jurján") is a town in the north of Iran.

and offers yet another proof of the existence of this form in the pre-Islámic Irán. The following two verses are from this *Masnaví*. They contain a very sweet simile. The lover says to the beloved:

نگارا تو گل سرخی و من زرد   تو از شادی شگفتی و من از درد
بیا آنسرخ گل بر زرد گل نه   که در باغ این دو گل با یکدگر به

O Beloved! Thou art a red rose and I a yellow one,
Thy bloom is due to happiness and mine due to pain;
O Come! Put that red rose on the yellow one,
For, the two roses had better be together in the Garden.

(ii) *Khusraw-u-Shírín.*

The *Masnaví of Khusraw-u-Shírín,* celebrating the romance of the Sásánian monarch Khusraw Parvíz (خسرو پرویز) (A.D. 590—628) and his Armenian beloved, Shírín,, was composed by Nizámí of Ganja (A.H. 580/A.D. 1184). This love-story is undoubtedly derived from the Sásánian sources. It is composed in the same metre as *Vís-u-Rámín,* namely بحرهزج مسدس محذوف . Though the poet has used a large number of Arabic words and idioms under the influence of his age (6th century A.H.), the literary characteristics of the Sásánian era are clearly noticeable in this *Masnaví*. On an occasion, referring to Bárbud, the famous court-musician of Khusraw who used to play thirty melodies on his sitár, Nizámí recounts all the names of the thirty tunes in beautiful puns and metaphors. These names are themselves highly figurative. He begins:

ستار باربد آواز در داد سماع ارغنون را ساز در داد
زصد دستان که اورا بود دمساز گزیده کرد سی لحن خوش آواز
زخوش لحنی در آن سی سازچون نوش گهی دل دادی و گه بستدی هوش

Lo! The Sitar of Bárbud is calling,
The melody of the Organs is (also) harmonized;
Out of the hundred tunes intimately known to him,
He (Bárbud) has selected thirty pleasant melodies,
The sweetness of these thirty tunes, like the honey,
Sometimes wins the heart and sometimes makes one ecstatic.

The use of musical terms in these beautiful lines indicates that in the courts of the kings and satraps of Iran, poetry was recited with the accompaniment of *guitar*.

(c) *Fragments of Pahlaví Poetry.*

Monsieur Beneveniste, a French orientalist who is an eminent

professor of ancient Iranian languages at the University of Paris, has discovered some beautiful fragments of Pahlaví verses. These fragments possess all the embellishments of language and meaning. The oldest of these is about a debate between the *date tree* and the *goat,* each arguing that it is superior to the other.

Although the said fragment, known as the *"Darakhte-Ashúrik"* درخت آشوریك, is brief and mutilated, it is an outstanding specimen of the Pahlaví poetry. One of the pieces rendered into French by Monsieur Beneveniste gives a vivid impression of its quality, and causes regret that so much has perished. I thought it opportune to quote the French translation here:

> Le soliel lumineux, la pleine lune rayonnante
> Resplendissent et rayonnent hors du tronc de cet arbre;
> Les oiseaux eclatants s'y pavanent pleins de joie,
> Se pavanent les colombes et les paons biggarres.[1]

(*d*) *The Tradition of Bahrám Gúr.*

The tradition of King Bahrám Gúr (A.D. 420—438) whom the writers of biographies of poets have described as the first Iranian poet, is very significant. It is said that in imitation of the Arabic "Rajaz" رجز, he invented a kind of the same poem in Persian. Having spent the early part of his life among the Arabs, he composed verses in self-praise in the style of the valiant Arabs of the Jáhiliyyah. The following verse is attributed to him:

منم آن ببر دمان و منم آن شیر یله   نام من بهرام گور و کنیتم بوجبله

> I am that powerful tiger, I am that valiant lion,
> My name is Bahrám Gúr and my Kuniyeh is Bú-Jabaleh.

Even if this tradition be treated as fictitious, lacking historical bias, it cannot be denied that this great Sásánian monarch took a keen interest in poetry and music. Moreover, it was the same monarch who carried a host of Indian musicians and minstrels to his country. He is said to have been anxious to promote the beatitude of his subjects. Once he was told that though the people led an affluent life, there were not enough musicians to entertain them at the drinking parties. Bahrám Gúr at once sent an emissary to India to request Shangal (?), the then ruler of this country, to send musicians to Irán. In compliance, Shangal despatched ten thousand minstrels with their lyres and they were

1. *Legacy of Persia* p. 203.

scattered in all the towns and villages of Irán. The *Sháhnáma* relates the story in the following verses:

و زآن پس بهر موبدی نامه کرد   کسی را که درویش بد جامه کرد
بپرسید شان گفت بی رنج کیست   بهرجای دوریش وبی گنج کیست
ز کار جهان یکسر آگه کنید   دام را سوی روشنی ره کنید
بیامدش پاسخ زهر موبدی   ز هر نامداری و هر بخردی
که آباد بینیم روی زمین   بهر جای پیوسته شد آفرین
مگر مرد درویش کز شهریار   بنالد همی و از بد روزگار
که چون می گسارد توانگر همی   بسر بر ز گل دارد افسر همی
بر آواز رامشگران می خورد   که ما مردمان را بکس نشمرد
تهی‌دست بی رود وگل‌می خورد   شهنشاه از این در یکی بنگرد
بخندید از آن نامه بسیار شاه   هیونی بر افگند پویان براه
بنزدیک شنگل فرستاد کس   چنین گفت کایشاه فریاد رس
از آن لوریان بر گزین ده هزار   نر و ماده بر زخم بربط سوار
که استاد بر زخم دستان بود   وز آواز او رامش جان بود
چو نامه بنزدیک شنگل رسید   سر از فخر بر چرخ گردون کشید
همان گاه شنگل گزین کرد زود   ز لوری کجا شاه فرموده بود
چو لوری بیامد بنزدیک شاه   بفرمود تا بر گشادند راه
کند پیش درویش رامشگری   ورا رایگانی کند کهتری [1]

Some scholars believe that the gypsy tribes throughout the world, whose chief profession is singing and playing on the *guitar*, are the descendants of the Lúrián or Lúliyán (gypsies) of India who went to Irán during the reign of Bahrám Gúr.

3. *Conclusion.*

The aforesaid facts prove the existence of an well-developed poetical and lyrical art among the pre-Islámic Iránians.

It is assumed that during the three centuries following the Arab invasion (7th, 8th and 9th century A.D.), poetry remained subdued owing to the intermingling of the two races, the two systems of thought and the two languages. But, as soon as the national life was revived in eastern and north eastern Irán (سیستان و ماوراء النهر) during the 10th

1 *The Sháhnáma*, Teheran, p. 411.

century A.D. and these regions achieved independence, that eternal fire (poetry) was rekindled. The seeds that had remained buried for some time past sent offshoots and soon grew into a mighty tree; so much so, that even after the lapse of a thousand years, that tree has retained its freshness and bloom, and is now laden with multi-colour buds and flowers.

4. *A Select Bibliography.*

To the students of Persian literature who want to study the pre-Islámic poetry of Irán, the following books are recommended:

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LECTURE VI

POETRY II (ISLAMIC)

A. Birth and evolution of Persian poetry.

B. The extent of Persian poetry.

C. Gems of Persian poetry—Some of the great masters:

1. Firdawsí (فردوسی)
2. Khayyám (خیام)
3. Maulaví (مولوی)
4. Nizámí (نظامی)
5. Sa'dí (سعدی)
6. Ḥáfiẓ (حافظ)
7. Waḥshí (وحشی)
8. Jámí (جامی)

A. *Birth and evolution of Persian poetry.*

As I said in the previous talk, Persian poetry is the product of the delicate mind, the sharp wit and the artistic taste of the people who speak that language. It has an ancient origin and is not confined to any particular period of history. From the time long preceding the reign of Cyrus the Great, (B.C. 546), when the old religious hymns were first chanted in Iran, down to the present day, this heavenly fire has been kept burning in the hearts of the Iranians. It may be said that the Muses have never been indifferent to the people of this land. But, after the Arab invasion and the intermingling of the two great races, the Aryan and the Semitic, the promising seedling of the early poetry grew into a mature and impressive tree and brought forth beautiful blossoms and delicious fruits.

Biologists hold that mixing of two breeds of the same species yields a progeny which, though resembling the parents in their broad features, improves upon them both in appearance and quality. Many examples have been quoted in the human, the animal and the plant lives in support of this contention. India, having been the land of the intermingling of diverse races during the past several millennia, offers innumerable instances of the correctness of this biological principle. A man like Sháh-Jahán, whose artistic taste was responsible for the

creation of the immortal style of the architecture of his age, was born of a Tartar father and an Indian mother. Similarly, the father of Amír Khusraw who was one of the great poets of India and the forerunner of Persian poetry in the sub-continent, was a Turk and his mother was an Indian woman.[1]

This natural law is equally applicable to nations and races. The English who, as a people, are one of the most progressive nations of the world, having produced men like Cromwell and Shakespeare and a host of politicians, scientists and litterateurs, came into existence as a result of the intermingling of the Saxons and the Normans.

This racial intermixture, in the case of some nations who believe in "excessive racialism", may not have proved very desirable but the laws of Nature cannot be changed by the social conventions of man. Such intermingling, as has taken place among most of the races as a result of wars or peaceful contacts, has undoubtedly yielded very auspicious results, contributing to the progress of humanity.

The history of Iran offers the best example of this natural fact.

After the fall of Madá'in and the break-up of the Sásánians (A.D. 637), three centuries elapsed before the present Persian was able to complete the various stages of birth, growth and development. At last in the early 4th century A.H. the newly-born Irano-Arab race, which was the inheritor of the great ethnic qualities of the Aryan and the Semitic races, gave birth to modern Iran. Since then, it has offered to the world many wonderful gifts, one of which is the Persian poetry.

B. *The Extent of Persian poetry.*

Persian poetry was the medium through which the language, the literature, the philosophy, the religion—in short, everything in the realm of the sciences and the letters that belonged to the Persian-speaking people—was conveyed abroad. The radii of the great circle which signified the extent of Persian poetry touched the shores of the Bay of Bengal on one hand and those of the Mediterranean on the other.

Further, to illustrate this point, I shall refer to the lives of four great poets who lived during the period between the 6th and the 7th centuries A.H./12-13th centuries A.D. They were more or less contemporaries, having lived within 100 years of each other's times, spent their lives in the four corners of the then civilized world. They have

1 Qiránu's-Sa'dain, the Preface, Aligarh, 1918.

left their masterpieces in highly perfected forms of Persian poetry. They are:

1. In the East ... Amír Khusraw (d. A.H. 725/A.D. 1324) who was the author of the *Kulliyát* and the *Khamsa* (the five masnavís), is one of the great poets of India. He was born at Patiali and he died in Delhi.

2. In the West ... Jalálu'd-Dín Muhammad, commonly known as "Rúmí" (d. A.H. 672/A.D. 1273) lived in Qúniyeh (Asia Minor). His immortal work, the great *Masnaví,* will no doubt ever remain as one of the pillars of mysticism and ethics.

3. In the North ... Nizámí of Ganja (d. A.H. 600/A.D. 1204). His five *Masnavís* or the *"Khamsa"* are the five gems of the mystic, ethical and legendary poetry, He was brought up in Ganja (Caucasia) and he died there.[1]

4. In the South ... Musharrafu'd-Dín Muslih, Sa'dí of Shíráz (d. A.H. 690/A.D. 1291). His two great and monumental works viz., the *Gulistán* and the *Bústán* as well as other masterpieces will ever be remembered as immortal works. The great master lived in Shíráz and died there.

C. *Gems of Persian poetry—Some of the great masters.*

Since Persian Poetry served as the school for the training of the Iranian thinkers and philosophers, it was through this medium that the learning of this people was manifested and the thoughts of this nation were spread abroad.

1. *Firdawsí*

Above all, this great school of Persian poetry offered an opportunity to Abu'l-Qásím Firdawsí of Ṭús to produce one of the great epic-poems of the world, the *Sháhnáma* (completed about A.H. 400), which rivals the *Iliad* of the Greeks and the *Mahábhárata* of the Indians. He is quite correct when he says:

جهان کرده ام از سخن چون بهشت   ازین پیش تخم سخن کس نکشت
بسی رنج بردم در این سال سی   عجم زنده کردم بدین پارسی

1 During the same Age, another great Master, Badr Cháchí (13th century A.D.) was brought up in the city of Shásh, in modern Táshkand which is situated in the north of Jaxartes or Síhún. Though very little of his verses has survived, whatever remains is truly representative of the poetry of the extreme North.

بناهای آباد گردد خراب   ز باران و از تابش آفتاب
پی افگندم از نظم کاخی بلند   که از باد و باران نیابد گزند
بر این نامه بر عمر ها بگذرد   بخواند هر آنکس که دارد خرد
نمیرم از این پس که من زنده ام   که تخم سخن را پراگنده ام
هر آنکس که دارد هش و رای و دین   پس از مرگ بر من کند آفرین[1]

I have made the world a paradise with my words; never before did anyone sow the seeds of poetry (so well).

I endured many a hardship during these thirty years; I have revived 'Ajam through this Persian.

Many a prosperous edifice is ruined by rains and the heat of the Sun

I have founded a lofty palace with my poetry to which the rains and the storms can do no harm.

This book will survive for ages and it will be read by all who are wise.

Henceforth, I shall not die, since I am immortalized by my speech.

Anyone who has intelligence, judgement and faith shall praise me after my death.

2. *Khayyám*

To this very school also belongs the great mathematician-philosopher, 'Omar Khayyám, whose imperishable Ruba'ís speak of the transient nature of the physical world, reveal the secrets of life and manifest the insignificance of man before the power and greatness of the universe.

He says:

یك قطرهٔ آب بود و با دریا شد   یک ذره خاك با زمین یکتا شد
آمد شدن تو اندرین عالم چیست   آمد مگسی پدید و نا پیدا شد[2]

Into this Universe, and Why not knowing
Nor Whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not Whither, willy-nilly blowing.[3]

1 The *Sháhnáma*.

2 *Khayyám*, Furúghi's edition, Teheran, A.H. 1321 (Solar), pp. 46 and 47.

3 *Rubá'iyát of 'Omar Khayyám* by E. Fitzgerald, David Mackay Co., edition, Philadelphia, 1942, No. 29.

Also he said:

در دایرهٔ که آمد و رفتن ماست   او را نه بدایت نه نهایت پیداست

کس می نزند دمی در این معنی راست   کاین آمدن از کجا و رفتن بکجاست[1]

> YESTERDAY This Day's Madness did prepare;
> TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
> Drink! for you know not whence you come, nor why:
> Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.[2]

3. *Maulaví*

Another member of the great school is Jalálu'd-Dín Muḥammad Balkhí, known as "Rúmí". In parables, stories and anecdotes, through similes, metaphors and metonymy of his ardent verses, he has taught us many a secret of the universe. Long before the physicists had discovered the *law of evolution* of the *molecule* and the *atom,* Rúmí had visualized it by sheer insight and had explained the law in his simple, appealing and poetic language.

He said:

هر نفس نو میشود دنیا و ما   بیخبر از نو شدن اندر بقا

عمر همچون جوی نو نو میرسد   مستمری مینماید در جسد

آن ز تیزی مستمر شکل آمدست   چون شررکش تیز جنبانی بدست

شاخ آتش را بجنبانی بساز   در نظر آتش نماید بس دراز

این درازی مدت از تیزی صنع   مینماید سرعت انگیزی صنع[3]

> Every moment the world and we are renewed, without becoming aware of the change.
> The Life is like a brook whose water is changing all the time. while the body is incessently changing, the Soul continues.
> The rapidity of this change gives it the shape of continuity, just like a revolving spark which gives the impression of an unbroken halo.
> If a fire-stick is waved sideways, it looks like a long column of fire.
> The length of time and the speed of creation vindicates the Creative Power.

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1 *Khayyám,* Furúghi's Edition.

2 *Rubá'iyát of 'Omar Khayyám op. cit.* No. 74.

3 *Masnaví,* Abridged and annoted by Furúzánfar, Teheran, A.H. 1321 (Solar), Vol. I, p. 24.

4. *Nizámí*

Also to this school belongs Nizámí of Ganja. Before scientists like Kepler (A.D. 1571) and Laplace (A.D. 1749) were able to prove the hugeness of the universe and the solar system through scientific methods and exact mathematical calculations, Nizámí had said:

زمین در جنب این نه کاخ مینا   چو خشخاشی است اندر جنب دریا
تو خود بنگر کازین خشخاش چندی   مگر اندر بروت خود بخندی

Compared to the nine blue celestial domes the earth is like a poppy-seed in the sea.

Thou canst well imagine what a small particle of this poppy-seed thou art.

And thou shouldst laugh under thy whiskers at thyself.

Also he said:

دگر ره گفت کاجرام کواکب   بگو تا برچه مرکوبند راکب
شنیدم من که هر کوکب جهانیست   جداگانه زمین و آسمانیست

Again he asked about the celestial bodies. Tell me! On what vehicles are these travelling.

I have heard that every planet is a world, having its own separate earth and sky.

Also Nizámí explained the *law of motor-power* and *inertia* which are important laws in physics. He said:

بای در عقل هر دانندهای هست   که با گردنده گردانندهای هست
از آنچرخه که گرداند زن پیر   قیاس چرخ گردون را همی گیر
چو گرداند ورا دست خردمند   در آن گردش بماند ساعتی چند

Say, it is in the mind of every knowledgeable person that every moving article has a mover behind it.

The handloom is turned by the old woman; Thou may visualise the same about the wheels of the firmament.

When the hand of the wise turns a thing, it remains moving for some time.

5. *Sa'dí*

The same school has also the distinction of having produced an ode-writer of the greatness of Musharrafu'd-Dín Muṣliḥ b. 'Abdu'lláh Sa'dí of Shíráz. His verses are highly lyrical. He has imbibed in his work some thought, originally expressed in Arabic. He has made immortal contributions both to prose and poetry, to ghazals and to

moral teachings. He achieved such perfection in his poetic diction that he became known as *"the last poet of the time"* سعدی آخر الزمان . In one of his odes, he says:

رها نمیکند ایام در کنار منش   که داد خود بستانم ببوسه از دهنش

همان کمند بگیرم که صید خاطر خلق   بدان همی کند و در کشم بخویشتنش

و لیك دست نیارم زدن درآن سرزلف   که مبلغی دل خلقست زیر هر شکنش

غلام قامت آن لعبتم که برقد او   بریده اند لطافت چو جامه بربدنش

ز رنگ و بوی تو ای سرو قد سیم اندام   برفت رونق نسرین باغ و نسترنش

یکی بحکم نظر پای در گلستان نه   که پایمال کنی ارغوان و یاسمنش

خوشا تفرج نوروز خاصه در شیراز   که بر کند دل مرد مسافر از وطنش

عزیز مصر چمن شد جمال یوسف گل   صبا بشهر در آورد بوی پیرهنش

شگفت نیست گر از غیرت تو بر گلزار   بگرید ابر و بخندد شگوفه بر چمنش

در این روش که توئی گر بمرده بر گذری   عجب نباشد اگر نعره آید از کفنش

نماند فتنه در ایام شاه جز سعدی   که برجمال تو فتنه است و خلق برسخنش

"O Fortune suffers me not to clasp my sweetheart to my breast,
Nor lets me forget my exile long in a kiss on her sweet lips pressed,
The noose wherewith she is wont to snare her victims far and wide
I will steal away, that so one day I may lure her to my side.
Yet I shall not dare caress her hair with a hand that is over-bold,
For snared therein, like birds in a gin, are the hearts of lovers untold.
A slave am I to that gracious form, which, as I picture it,
Is clothed in grace with a measuring-rod, as tailors a garment fit.
O cypress-tree, with silver limbs, this colour and scent of thine
Have shamed the scent of the myrtle-plant and the bloom of the eglantine.
Judge with thine eyes, and set thy foot in the garden fair and free,
And tread the jasmine under thy foot, and the flowers of the Judas-tree.
O joyous and gay is the New Year's Day, and in Shíráz most of all;
Even the stranger forgets his home, and becomes its willing thrall.
O'er the garden's Egypt, Joseph-like, the fair red rose is King,

And the Zephyr, e'en to the heart of the town, doth the scent of his raiment bring,
O wonder not if in time of spring thou dost rouse such jealousy,
That the cloud doth weep while the flowerets smile, and all on account of thee!
If o'er the dead thy feet should tread, those feet so fair and fleet,
No wonder it were if thou should'st hear a voice from his winding-sheet.
Distraction is banned from this our land in the time of our lord the King,
Save that I am distracted with love of thee, and men with the songs I sing." [1]

On another occasion, speaking of the training of the soul and the high ideals of morality, he says:

تن آدمی شریفست بجان آدمیت
نه همین لباس زیباست نشان آدمیت
اگر آدمی بچشم است و دهان و گوش و بینی
چه میان نقش دیوار و میان آدمیت
بحقیقت آدمی باش و گرنه مرغ باشد
که همین سخن بگوید بزبان آدمیت
مگر آدمی نبودی که اسیر دیو ماندی
که فرشته ره ندارد بمکان آدمیت
اگر این درنده خوئی ز طبیعتت بمیرد
همه عمر زنده باشی بروان آدمیت [2]

The body of man is ennobled by the existence in it of the soul;
The attractive garment in itself is not the symbol of humanity.
If manhood could be claimed by virtue of the eye, the mouth, the ear, and the nose,
What difference would there be between the painting on the wall and man?
Be a man in reality; for, the bird can also articulate man's words.
Were not thou man that thou hast fallen victim to the devil; for, even the angel can find no entry into the human edifice.
If this beastliness in thy nature perishes, thou wilt live for all time by thy soul.

1 E. G. Browne, *Literary History of Persia,* vol. II, p. 534.
2 Sa'dí, *Tayyibát.*

6. *Ḥáfiẓ*

Also to this school belongs the Divine-Poet, the "Interpreter of the Divine secrets" ترجمان الاسرار or the "Tongue of the Unseen", لسان الغیب viz., Shamsu'd-Dín Muḥammad Ḥáfiẓ of Shíráz. He elevated the Persian ode to its highest perfection, unattained by any other poet ever since. He united in himself a keen taste for beauty with an innate eloquence and a deep knowledge of the culture of his age. He derived inspiration from the *Qur'án,* more than any other poet did. In his poetry Háfiẓ intermixes divine secrets and the philosophic as well as mystic facts. His odes are full of sweet metaphors and beautiful references derived from the history of Iran as well as the history of religions in general. In one of his odes which he sent to the King of Bengal as an eulogy he says:

ساقی حدیث سرو و گل و لاله میرود — وین بحث با ثلاثه غساله میرود
می ده که نو عروس چمن حد حسن یافت — کار این زمان ز صنعت دلاله میرود
شکر شکن شوند همه طوطیان هند — زین قند پارسی که به بنگاله میرود
طی مکان ببین و زمان در سلوک شعر — کاین طفل یك شبه ره یکساله میرود
آن چشم جادوانه و عابد فریب بین — کش کاروان سحر ز دنباله میرود
از ره مرو بعشوه دنیا که این عجوز — مکاره مینشیند و محتاله میرود
باد بهار میوزد از گلستان شاه — وز ژاله باده در قدح لاله میرود
حافظ ز شوق مجلس سلطان غیاث دین — غافل مشو که کار تو از ناله میرود

Cypress and tulip and sweet eglantine,
Of these the tale from lip to lip is sent;
Washed by three cups, oh Saki, of thy wine,
My song shall turn upon this argument.
Spring, bride of all the meadows, rises up,
Clothed in her ripest beauty: fill the cup!
Of Spring's handmaidens runs this song of mine.

The sugar-loving birds of distant Ind,
Except a Persian sweetmeat that was brought
To fair Bengal, have found nought to their mind.
See how my song, that in one night was wrought,
Defies the limits set by space and time!
O'er plains and mountain-tops my fearless rhyme,
Child of a night, its year-long road shall find.

And thou whose sense is dimmed with piety,
Thou too shalt learn the magic of her eyes;
Forth comes the caravan of sorcery
When from those gates the blue-veined curtains rise.

And when she walks the flowery meadows through,
Upon the jasmine's shamed cheek the dew
Gathers like sweat, she is so fair to see!

Ah, swerve not from the path of righteousness
Though the world lure thee! like a wrinkled crone,
Hiding beneath her robe lasciviousness,
She plunders them that pause and heed her moan.
From Sinai Moses brings thee wealth untold;
Bow not thine head before the calf of gold
Like Samir, following after wickedness.

From the Shah's garden blows the wind of Spring,
The tulip in her lifted chalice bears
A dewy wine of Heaven's minist'ring;
Until Ghiyasuddin,[1] the Sultan, hears,
Sing, Hafiz, of thy longing for his face.
The breezes whispering round thy dwelling-place
Shall carry lament unto the King.[2]

7. *Waḥshí*

Another representative of this school is Waḥshí of Báfq a village in Kermán (d. A.D. 1583). He was an ardent and highly inspired poet as well as a keen observer of the beauties of nature. He lived on the borders of the deserts of south-east Iran and it was there that he sang his highly lyrical odes which speak well of a mind full of wild hopes and a heart replete with fiery love. Long before the discovery of the *law of gravity* by Issac Newton (A.D. 1642—1727), Waḥshi had not only discovered it vaguely but he had also explained it in a beautiful fragment.[3] He said:

یکی میل است درهر ذره رقاص کشان هر ذره را تا مرکز خاص
ز جسم آسمانی وز زمینی از این میل است هرجنبش که بینی
جنیبت در جنیبت خیل در خیل همین میل است و این میل است و این میل

There is a dancing desire in every particle which draws it to a particular centre.
Every movement of the heavenly and the earthly bodies which thou seest is due to this desire.
In every swarm and every multitude,
There is this desire, this desire and this desire alone.

1 Arthur J. Arberry, *Fifty Poems of Háfiz,* Cambridge University Press, 1953. p. 161. (The commentators identify this Ghiyáṣu'd-Dín alternatively as the king of Bengal (acc. 769|1367), and the Prince of Herat Ghiyáth al-Dín Pir 'Alí (ruled A.H. 772-92 A.D. 1370-89). The name does not occur elsewhere in the Díván.

2 As in f.n. 1. (p. 104).

3 Waḥshí's *Masnavi,* Farhád-Shírín, Bombay.

8. *Jámí*

Lastly, the same school produced the great encyclopædic poet, 'Abdur-Raḥmán Jámí who harmonized mysticism with theology شریعت و طریقت and an abundant treasure of the traditions of the Islamic studies which had developed during the nine centuries of the growth of the Islámic culture. Though his sources were confined to the Arabic works, he gathered a vast collection of thought-provoking matter in his voluminous septet (سبعه), forming seven beautiful maṣnavís of Persian poetry.

In one of these,[1] he describes a story attributed to Alexander's interview with the Brahmins. This story contains a dialogue between that valiant conqueror and the peace-loving Brahmins of India. Those predecessors of the Gandhian philosophy had advised Alexander to promote the cause of peace and non-violence.

I end today's discourse with a quotation from the sayings of the Brahmins. The word Brahmin is considered synonymous with the *wise* in Persian literature.

سکندر چو بر هند لشکر کشید   خردمندی برهمانان شنید
گروهی خدا دان و حکمت شناس   بریده ز گیتی امید و هراس
نیامد از ایشان کسی سوی او   ز تقصیر شان گرم شد خوی او
بر انگیخت لشکر پی قهر شان   شتابان رخ آورد در شهر شان
چو زان برهمانان خبر یافتند   بتدبیر آن کار بشتافتند
رسیدند پیشش در اثنای راه   بعرضش رساندند کای پادشاه
گروهی فقیریم حکمت پژوه   چه تابی رخ مرحمت زین گروه
نه ما را سر صلح و نی تاب جنگ   درین کار به گر نمائی درنگ
نداریم جز گنج حکمت متاع   نشاید ز کس بر سر آن نزاع
اگر گنج حکمت همی بایدت   بجز کنجکاوی نمی شایدت
بود کاوش گنج طاعتوری   نه کشور گشائی و غارتگری
سکندر چو بشنید این عرضحال   ز لشکر کشیدن کشید انفعال
بان چند تن راه جان بر گرفت   دل از ملك و مال جهان برگرفت
پس از قطع هامون بکوهی رسید   در او کنده هر سو بسی غار دید

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1 *Khirad-Náma-i-Iskandarí.*

گروهی نشسته در آن غارها — فرو شسته دست از همه کارها
ردا و ازار از گیا بافته — عمامه بفرق از گیا تافته
گشادند باهم زبان خطاب — بسی شد ز هر سو سؤال و جواب
بسا رمز حکمت که پرداختند — بسا سر مشکل که حل ساختند
چو آمد بسر مجلس گفتگوی — سکندر بر آن حاضران کرد روی
که هرچ از جهان احتیاج شماست — بخواهید از من که یکسر رواست
بگفتند ما را در این خاکدان — نباید بجز هستی جاودان
بگفتا که این نیست مقدور من — و زین حرف خالی است منشور من
بگفتند چون دانی این راز را — چرا بندهٔ شهوت و آز را
پی ملك تا چند خون ریختن — بهر کشوری لشکر انگیختن
گرفتم که گیتی همه آن تست — جهان سر بسر زیر فرمان تست
چه حاصل چو می باید آخر گذاشت — بدل تخم اندوه جاوید کاشت

When Alexander invaded India he heard about the wisdom of the Brahmins,

That they are a group of pious and scholarly men who have banished all worldly hopes and fears from their hearts.

None came from amongst them to meet Alexander who was enraged by their remissness.

He rallied his armies to punish them and hastened towards their city.

When the Brahmins came to know of this, they hurriedly contrived a plan.

They met him on the way and said to him, "O King,

"We are a poor group of men, devoted to knowledge and study; why shouldst thou deprive us of thy favours?"

"Neither have we leisure for peace nor power for war;

Better give a patient thought to thy hasty action (against us)."

"We have no wealth except the wealth of knowledge, but none should quarrel with us on that score."

"If thou be in need of the treasure of knowledge,

(Know that) it is not accessible except with hard quest."

"The search for knowledge signifies obedience and not invading countries and marauding them."

When Alexander heard this petition, he felt ashamed of his invasion.

He followed some of them to the Path of Life, giving up his kingdom and wealth.

After crossing deserts, they reached a mountain wherein several caves were dug.

A group of men, having abandoned all activity, had confined itself to these caves.

Their dress was of woven grass and they wore turbans of the same.

All of them simultaneously addressed Alexander and a good deal of questions and answers were exchanged.

Many secrets of knowledge were told and many difficult problems were solved.

When the meeting came to an end, Alexander addressed the audience saying:

"It is proper for you to ask me for any worldly need you may have.

They replied, "In this place of rubbish (the world) we have no desire except the attainment of an eternal life."

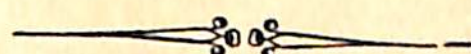
Alexander said, "This is beyond my power, my charter is devoid of this word, (eternity)."

They said, "If thou knowest this secret, why art thou a slave to lust and greed?"

"How long wouldst thou shed blood for the sake of acquiring kingdoms and invading every country?"

"Supposing the whole world is at thy feet and submits to thy commands"

"Even so, what would be thy gain, for, at last, one must leave this world and sow the seed of eternal regret in one's heart."



LECTURE VII

POETRY III (Contd.)

Persian proper.

Borrowed or imitated from Arabic.

Persian writers of Arabic.

I. Forms common to the Arabs and the Persians.

A. The Qaṣida (Panegyric)

B. The Ghazal (Ode)

C. The Qaṭ'a (Fragment)

II. Forms peculiar to the Persians.

D. The Rubá'í (Quatrain)

E. The Masnaví (Couplet)

F. The Tarjí'át etc., (Stanzaic Poems).

Analysis of the Kulliyát of Mírzá Ghálib (as specimen).

III. Forms of Modern poetry.

The Influence of European poetry.

The first innovation.

Conclusion.

Apologies and Thanks.

Forms of Poetry.

Persian poetry has different classifications with regard to its form and matter. Each class has its own representative poets who are recognized as 'Masters' of that particular class.

Considering the form, there are six important kinds or patterns in the classical verses. Some of these have been borrowed from the Arabic poetry, while some others, existing in Iran from the ancient times, have retained their originality in form and appearance. Even if the Arabic poetry of the later epochs is found to contain verses essentially of Persian types or those similar to them, these were certainly borrowed

or copied by the Arabs from the Persian poetry. It should not, however, be overlooked that the pure and genuine poetry of the Arabs, which may be said to be free from foreign influence, particularly of Iran, was that, which flourished in the Arabian Peninsula more than a century before the advent of Islam and which continued to exist for more than two centuries after it. The Arab writers characterized the poetry of the first period (Pre-Islamic) as the *Jáhiliyyah* poetry (الشعر الجاهلی) and that of the second as the *Mukhazramiyyah* and *Umayyad* poetry الشعر المخضرمی و الاموی . These were the product of the pure Arabic genius.

From the 8th century A.D./2nd century A.H. onwards, the Iranians mastered the Arabic language so well that they could not only convey their thoughts and ideas in it, both in prose and poetry, but they also excelled the Arabs themselves in Arabic composition. As a matter of fact, the Iranians were responsible for the compilation of the *grammar* and the *rhetoric* of the Arabic language.

From the 3rd century A.H. onwards not only was the Arabic literature (later known as the Abbasid literature (الادب العباسی) benefited from the contribution of the Iranian talents, but they also unconsciously transferred a good deal of the thoughts and subjects from their own old tongue to the new language.[1]

As I said earlier, some of the forms of the Persian poetry born during the 4th century A.H. were borrowed from the Arabs, while some other originally belonging to the Iranians, were reciprocally introduced into the Arabic poetry.

In today's discourse, I shall discuss three different forms of the Persian poetry borrowed from the Arabs and three essentially Persian forms. For each one of them I shall mention only a few masters, who represent that particular form. It is, however, out of the scope of these discourses to discuss all of them in detail.

I. *Forms common to the Arabs and the Persians.*

A. The *Qaṣída* (Panegyric) قصیده . It is a long poem of about twenty to a hundred or more verses of the same metre and rhyming with one another. This is the oldest form of Arabic poetry which has existed since the *Jáhiliyyah* period. In the last verse of these poems, called the Maqṭa' مقطع , the poet mentions his pseudonym تخلص .

1 R. A. Nicholson, London, *The Literary History of the Arabs;* and C. Huart, *Literature Arabe,* Paris.

To this form in Persian poetry, many poets have made their lasting contributions. The first of the great qaṣída-writers was the blind poet-musician, Rúdakí of Bukhára رودکی بخارائی "the father of the Persian poetry" (d. 491 A.D.). He earned great fame in this branch. He was the first poet who versified the famous *Kalíla-va-Dimna* (*Panchatantra*) in a beautiful masnaví. This masnaví has since long disappeared. Only some seventy verses of the whole book exist today.

After him, under the Ghaznavids (A.D. 1000), qaṣída-writing reached the highest degree of perfection. The poets of the Ghaznavid courts, like 'Unṣurí عنصری بلخی (A.D. 1050) and Farrukhí فرخی سیستانی (10th century) etc., have all left beautiful qaṣídas composed by them.

This form of poetry was equally popular during later periods and it still continues to attract the interest of the poets of our own times. Throughout the history, almost every court in Iran, Afghanistan and Medieval India has had its own poet-laureate ملك الشعراء, a title conferred upon a poet who excelled his contemporaries in qaṣída-writing.

During the 12th century A.D. Amír Mu'izzí امیر معزی (A.D. 1147) and his contemporaries, Anwarí انوری ابیوردی (d. A.D. 1190) and Kháqání خاقانی شیروانی (d. A.D. 1198) and others acquired high reputation for their qaṣídas. Even in India, the great masters of Persian poetry, like Amír Khusraw امیر خسرو دهلوی (d. A.D. 1325), Ḥasan Dihlaví حسن دهلوی (d. 1330 A.D.), 'Alláma Faiẓí علامه فیضی (1004 A.H.), 'Urfí عرفی شیرازی (d. 1591 A.D.) and lastly, Mírzá Ghálib اسد الله خان غالب دهلوی (d. 1869 A.D.) composed qaṣídas which may be described as غراء (brilliant).

In Iran during the last century, Qá'ání قاآنی شیرازی (d. A.D. 1854) was the greatest qaṣída-writer of the Qájár period.

In our own times, Muḥammad Taqí Bahár بهار خراسانی (d. A.D. 1951) very deservingly obtained the title of Poet-Laureate. He was a distinguished qaṣída-writer too.

From the qaṣída, two new forms were derived. The first is the Ghazal غزل (Ode) and the other is the Fragment قطعه .

B. *The Ghazal* (Ode) is a kind of the lyrical and amatory verse which used to form the preface or the introduction of the qaṣída, originally called تغزل . In the course of this introduction, the poet praised his beloved or complained of his separation from her or such

other themes. Sometimes also he described one of the phenomena of the nature, like the night, the day, the sunrise, the sun-set, the four weathers of the year etc. Later during the 11th century A.D. these introductory lyrical verses of the qaṣída gradually assumed an independent form, *i.e.*, the ghazal or the ode. Poets who had developed a keen taste for this kind of verse soon achieved great mastery in ghazal-writing. From then onwards, the ghazal has existed in Persian poetry in Iran and Afghanistan. Later on, it also appeared in India in the Urdu poetry and is still the most popular form of poetry in this sub-continent.

In short, the ghazal is a small poem of five to ten verses of the same metre, rhyming with one another. The poet mentions his pseudonym in the last verse. In the beginning, the ghazal chiefly contained sensual and amatory subjects, but later, during the 12th century A.D., its scope was broadened to cover ethical, mystic and sufistic subjects also. The ghazal resembles the English sonnet in certain respects.

Two great poets are reckoned as the chief 'masters' of this class. They are Sa'dí and Ḥáfiẓ. However, besides them, there have been many other celebrated ghazal writers during the medieval period of the literary history of Iran and India. They still hold high positions among the galaxy of the litterateurs of the world. Mention may be made of the following, among hundreds of others.

1. Khwájú Kírmání (خواجو کرمانی) d. A.D. 1341.
2. 'Abdu'r-Raḥmán Jámí (عبد الرحمن جامی) d. A.D. 1492.
3. Ṣá'ib Tabrízí (صائب تبریزی) d. A.D. 1669.
4. 'Urfí Shírází (عرفی شیرازی) d. A.D. 1591.
5. Viṣál Shírází (وصال شیرازی) d. A.D. 1846.
6. Bídil Díhlaví (بیدل دهلوی) d. A.H. 1134.
7. Maḥmúd Khán Qárí Kábulí (محمود خان قاری کابلی) deceased.
8. Ghálib Díhlaví (غالب دهلوی) d. A.D. 1869.
9. Iqbál Láhúrí (اقبال لاهوری) d. A.D. 1938.

These names have been mentioned as mere instances, for, truly speaking, the number of ghazal-writers is so extensive that it defies all attempt at enumeration.

Mention may also be made of the contemporary ghazal writers of Iran. They are the great inheritors of their ancesteral talent and a group of men who are keeping aloft this torch of spiritual light. In the

Indian sub-continent I have had the privilege of meeting some great ghazal writers who possess excellent poetical taste.

C. *The Qiṭ'a (Fragment).*

The other form of Persian poetry derived later on from the qaṣída is the fragment قطعه . It is a small poem of five to twenty verses of the same metre and rhyming with one another like the qaṣída. It is, however, not obligatory for the poet, to have rhyming hemistichs in the first verse or to mention his pseudonym at the end. Any subject, morals, maxims, admonition, description of an extra-ordinary incident, the day to day happenings, praise, satire, request for anything or an elegy etc., may form the contents of a fragment.

A fragment, however, contains only one subject and all its verses are devoted to it. This form, which has been in vogue ever since the 10th century A.D., was originally a part of the qaṣída.

The number of such poets as have acquired fame in this class of poetry is very numerous. The 12th century masters like Saná'i Ghaznaví سنائی غزنوی (A.D. 1160), Anwarí Khurásání and Kháqání Shírwání have left beautiful fragments. But Ibn Yamín ابن یمین (d. A.D. 1324) is particularly renowned for his fragments and his collection is included among the classics of the Persian literature. This pattern, as it furnishes the most appropriate vehicle for the expression of ideas, is current in Iran, Afghanistan and India and the great contemporary masters are:

1. Bahár of Khurásán (بهار خراسانی)
2. Iqbál of Lahore (اقبال لاهوری)
3. Ṣúratgar of Shíráz (صورتگر شیرازی)
4. Qárí Kábulí (قاری کابلی) Poet-Laureate of Afghanistan
5. Khalílu'lláh Khalílí of Afghanistan (خلیل الله خلیلی)

II. *Forms peculiar to the Persians.*

I shall now briefly describe the three kinds of poetry which are essentially Iranian.

D. *The Rubá'i (Quatrain).*

The oldest of all is the double-distich (دو بیتی) which I have previously discussed at length. On the same pattern *i.e.,* four small

hemi-stichs, quatrain (رباعی) was invented later. It usually deals with romantic sentiments or may contain philosophical or mystical subjects or even the problems of daily life. The rubá'í is still current and there are few poets in Iran, Afghanistan and India who have not composed it. The Arabs borrowed the rubá'ís from the Iranians at a later stage.

All rubá'ís have the same metre and their first, second and fourth hemistichs rhyme with each other. Since the pseudonym of the poet is not necessarily mentioned in them, the real composers of thousands of the existing Persian rubá'ís are not definitely known. Consequently, these are mostly attributed to one or the other of the famous rubá'í-writers.

The most important poet who has acquired greatest reputation in this field not only in Iran but throughout the world, was the great philosopher-mathematician, 'Umar Khayyám عمر خیام نیشاپوری. His rubá'ís have been translated into almost all the great languages of the world. Khayyám hardly needs any introduction as you must already have heard a good deal about him.

It would be most opportune to mention here the name of a great rubá'í-writer of this ancient city, viz., Sarmad سرمد کاشی (d. A.H. 1071) who was executed on the charge of infidelity during the reign of Aurangzíb and lies buried near the Jámi' Masjid and his rubá'ís are especially liked for their warmth and ardour.

E. *The Maṡnaví* (*Couplet-poem*).

Another form of poetry peculiar to the Iranians is the Maṡnaví or the couplet. The two hemistichs of the couplet rhyme with each other. A maṡnaví, maintains the same metre throughout and there is no limit to its length. The poet is at liberty either to write a maṡnaví of seven verses or he may expand it to seventy thousand. The poet is also free to select any subject for his maṡnaví, be it historical, legendary, ethical, philosophical, mystical or religious.

The greatest and at the same time the oldest of the existing Persian masnavís is the *Sháhnáma* of Firdawsí. Next to it among the epic maṡnavís comes the *Garshháspnáma* گرشاسپ نامه of Asadí اسدی طوسی (d. 11th century A.D.).

For a long time after these two masters, a series of epic maṡnavís were composed in the بحر تقارب in imitation of the style of Firdawsí, and they mostly celebrated the military exploits of the kings of their own times.

Next come the philosophical and mystical masnavís. The most famous among them are:

1. *Masnavíy-i-Saiqalu'l- Arwáh* مثنوی صیقل الارواح of the great mystic poet, Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí. This masnaví is so well-known that it has come to be known as the *Masnaví*.

2. The *Hadíqatu'l-Haqiqat* (حديقة الحقيقة) of Saná'í Ghaznaví سنائی غزنوی .

3. The allegorical masnaví of 'Attár عطار نیشاپوری (d. A.D. 1230) called the *"Parliament of the Birds"* منطق الطیر .

4. The five masnavís of Nizámí (خمسه نظامی), each of which deals with a different mystic, legandary or romantic subject and has a name of its own. These are:

بهرام نامه، خسرو شیرین، لیلی مجنون، مخزن الاسرار و اسکندر نامه

5. Copying the above, Amír Khusraw wrote five similar masnavís which are very well-known.

6. The seven masnavís of Jámí سبعه جامی .

Some of the works of Iqbál Láhúrí *e.g.* Rumúz-i-Bíkhudí (رموز بیخودی), Asrár-i-Khudí (اسرار خودی), Zabúr-i-'Ajam (زبور عجم) and Armaghán-i-Hijáz (ارمغان حجاز) contain beautiful masnavís which are highly appreciated in this sub-continent.

F. *The Tarjí'át (Stanzaic Poems).*

Next come the stanzaic poems—اشعار ادواری . All the verses of a poem of this type have the same metre but the rhymes differ from stanza to stanza. If the same verse is repeated at the end of every stanza by way of a refrain, the poem is called ترجیع بند . In Persian poetry two poems of this class are very famous. One of them belongs to Sa'dí and the other to Hátif. هاتف اصفهانی (d. A.D. 1784).

If, however, the last verse of a stanzaic poem has a rhyme of its own and different from those preceding or following it, the poem is called ترکیب بند . This pattern is still current in Iran and prominent contemporary poets like Bahár Khurásání بهار خراسانی (d. A.D. 1951), Wahíd وحید دستگردی (d. A.D. 1939) and Shúrída شوریده شیرازی (d. A.D. 1926), who have made valuable contributions to other forms of poetry, have also composed many beautiful poems of this pattern.

Now, instead of quoting specimens for the above-mentioned classes from different poets, I preferred to analyze the works of one poet only, and for this purpose I selected the Díwán of the great Indian master

Mírzá Ghálib, which contains beautiful specimens of every class. You may refer to his *Kulliyát,* printed and published by Naval-Kishore Press, Lucknow, 1925. His works, as contained in the Kulliyát, may be divided as follows:

1. Fragments ... ... pp. 11- 52
2. Stanzaic Poems ... ... pp. 53- 68
3. Masnavís ... ... pp. 69-160
4. Qaṣídas ... ... pp. 161-329
5. Ghazals ... ... pp. 330-500
6. Rubá'ís ... ... pp. 501-514

You may analyze the works of all other poets of Iran, Afghanistan and India on these lines and at once find out the different classes of uniformity adhered to. Sometimes all the odd hemistichs have the same poetry Since the works of all the classical poets published in these countries are divided in the aforesaid six classes, it becomes very easy to study the aforesaid different types.

III. *Forms of Modern Poetry.*

Contemporary poets of Iran have invented many new patterns of poetry in imitation of the European compositions and they have displayed their taste and talent in them. It is, however, yet difficult to give special names to these forms or to describe them with accuracy. Nevertheless, it is certain that verses are being composed in some newly-created musical metres in which the rhymes are not uniformly adhered to. Sometimes all the odd hemistichs have the same rhyme while the even ones rhyme differently.

'Alí Akbar Dikhudá,* a contemporary master, is perhaps the first poet who introduced this new form into Persian poetry. Forty-five years ago, in 1909, at the beginning of the political revolution in Iran, Dihkhudá wrote the elegy of one of his friends who was a devotee of the Constitutional Movement and was martyred in the struggle. The elegy was composed in Switzerland and it opened a new chapter in modern Persian poetry. It has five stanzas, one of which is quoted hereunder, as a specimen.

ای مرغ سحر چو این شب تار — بگذاشت ز سر سیاه کاری
وز نفحهٔ روح بخش اسحار — رفت از سر خفتگان خماری
بگشود گره ز زلف زر تار — محبوبهٔ نیلگون عماری
یزدان بکمال شد نمودار — و اهریمن زشت خو حصاری
یاد آر ز شمع مرده یاد آر

* It is regretted that these lectures were yet in the Press when in February, 1956, news reached us of the passing away of this great master.
رحمة الله عليه—Peace be on him!

O bird of the morning, when this gloomy night puts aside its dark deeds.

And, at the life-giving breath of the Dawn, bessotted slumber departs from the heads of those who sleep,

And the loved One enthroned on the dark blue litter loosens the knots from her golden-threaded locks,

And God is manifested in perfection, while Ahriman of evil nature withdraws to his citadel,

Remember, O remember, that extinguished lamp![1]

Unfortunately, time does not permit me to discuss the Modern poetry at length. A change has, however, taken place both as regards the originality and freshness of subjects and innovations in poetical forms. Those who are interested in the subject may refer to the following books:

(1) *Literary History of Persia,* vol. 4 by E. G. Browne

(2) *Sukhanwarán-i-Irán,* Vols. I and II by Dr. M. Ishaque

(3) *Modern Persian Poetry,* by Dr. M. Ishaque

(4) *Adabiyát-i-Mu'áṣir,* by the late Rashíd Yásimí.

* * * * *

Conclusion.

Here ends the series of my discourses about the Persian literature. I very much regret that I could not adhere to the original programme which covered a number of subjects. I was so much absorbed in the prose and poetry that other subjects could not get their due turn. There is a story in Sa'dí's *Gulistán* which applies to me here. It says:

یکی از صاحبدلان سر بجیب مراقبه فرو برده بود و در بحر مکاشفه مستغرق شده حالی که از این حالت باز آمد یکی از صحبان گفت ازین بستان که بودی تحفه کرامت کن گفتا بخاطر داشتم که اگر بدرخت گل برسم دامنی پر کنم هدیه اصحاب را چون برسیدم بوی گلم چنان مست کرد که دامنم از دست برفت .

"One of the pious men had gone in deep meditation and was drowned in the ocean of revelation. When he returned to his normal state, one of his friends asked him what noble gift he had brought for him from that garden. He replied that he intended to fill his skirts with flowers if he reached the rose-tree and bring them as gifts for his friends. But when he actually reached it, the smell of the roses so much intoxicated him that the skirt slipped from his hands."[2]

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1 Dr. M. Ishaque, *Modern Persian Poetry,* Calcutta, 1943, p. 106.

2 *Gulistán-i-Sa'dí, Sa'di,* Qarib edition, Teheran A.H. 1310, (Solar), p. 4.

Consequently, I had no alternative but to shelve the rest of the subjects viz., philosophy, religion, sufism and art to some other suitable opportunity.

Having no more to add, I heartily thank the University authorities, especially the charming Vice-Chancellor and the kind Dean of the Faculty of Arts, for taking great pains in arranging these discourses.

I am also very grateful to the members of the audience for spending their valuable time in listening to my humble talks. Truly, they have been the real source of encouragement and inspiration to me, for the Persian proverb says: مستمع صاحب سخن را بر سر شوق آورد *i.e.*, 'the listener kindles the enthusiasm of the speaker'.



